GIFFYGLYPH'S

DARKER DUNGEONS

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

5E

GIFFYGLYPH

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DARKER DUNGEONS

Version 4.0.0

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Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons

Beyond the safe 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, but 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 wise, and be brave. Light your torch and tread with care into *Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons*...

Features

- Create **random characters** and **level 0 rookies**.
- Use a new, easy-to-track **inventory system**.
- Track hunger, thirst, and fatigue with **conditions**.
- Spread plague and sickness with **deadly diseases**.
- Make magic dangerous with **magical burnout**.
- Make long travels 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 4.0.0
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PART 1

Getting Started

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How to start using Darker Dungeons.

2 Creating Adventures p7
Create new adventures and adventure paths.

3 Trials p13
Create and run skill challenges.

4 Dread p23
Create malevolent forces and big bads.

1

Setting Up

Modular toolkits—like *Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons*—can help you to customize your *Dungeons and Dragons* game and make it a better match for your own gameplay style, story, and tastes.

But how do you decide which modules to use, and how do you incorporate them into your game? This chapter will help guide you through the process.

Customize your Game

To start using *Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons* in your game, just follow these 3 simple steps:

1 Pick Some Modules

First, decide which modules you want to include in your game. Choose modules that support the type of gameplay and tone you want to encourage in your adventures.

Player Experience: When choosing your modules, keep in mind the overall experience level of your players. If your players are new to the game, try to keep significant changes to a minimum until they first have a comfortable grasp of the basic D&D rules.

Updating an Active Game: If you're modifying an already-active game, try to add just one or two modules at a time so that your players aren't too overwhelmed.

2 Talk With your Players

Next, talk to your players about what you want to include and why. Some modules can significantly change the "5th Edition" experience, so make sure that all players are comfortable with the changes you'd like to introduce.

Player Expectations: Keep in mind player expectations, and be willing to compromise on your module choices if there's disagreement about tone or gameplay.

3 Experiment and Adapt

Finally, it's time to start playing. During your adventures, you may decide that some modules don't fit your particular game after all—perhaps they don't match the tone, or they're too distracting, or they simply aren't being used. But that's ok—rules are made to be broken.

Swap modules in and out as best suits your table, or change specific rules to create your own custom variants.

As an example, here we see three different GMs use *Darker Dungeons* modules in different ways:

1. **Phased Integration:** A GM wants to make a small tweak to their existing campaign and replace only the default inventory system.

   The GM chooses the *Active Inventory* module with the *Quickslot* variant—and later switches to the *Containers* variant once the players are more comfortable with the changes.
2. **Specific Modules:** A second GM wants to make long-distance travel more involving in their game, and so they choose the *Making a Journey* module. They also add in *Survival Conditions* to highlight the need for food and water.

   Later in the game, when the party find themselves in a foul and rat-infested sewer, the GM references the *Deadly Disease* module.
3. **All In:** A third GM is creating a new Lovecraftian-themed campaign in the "West Marches" style. After talking it over with their group, the GM opts to use the entire ruleset.

   After a few sessions, however, the GM feels that they miss rolling for monster attacks—they drop *Active Defense* and revert to the original mechanics.

Modes of Play

This supplement contains a wide variety of modules, and not all are equal—some will impact the game and tone more drastically than others.

For convenience, the modules are grouped here into three broad modes of play: *Radiant*, *Dark*, and *Astral*. Pick the modules that are the right fit for your own game.

A Radiant

Radiant modules can be dropped into almost any *Dungeons and Dragons* game without significant tonal changes. These introduce small tweaks and changes with a focus on immersion and non-combat activities.

A. **Ability Checks:** A variety of tweaks to ability checks—including open skills, tool bonuses, and teamwork.
B. **Active Crafting:** Let your players craft items with easy-to-use crafting materials and recipes.
C. **Ammunition Dice:** Track ammunition using abstract terms and *ammunition dice*.
D. **Arcane Jewels:** Upgrade your weapons and armor with socketed jewels and permanent, arcane power.
E. **Cheating Fate:** Allow characters to escape certain death with rare and elusive fate points.
F. **Degrees of Success:** Add a success-at-a-cost option for characters to make failed rolls more interesting.
G. **Flasks:** Store potions in handy-to-carry potion flasks.
H. **Gemstones:** Add qualities to your gemstones and turn them into precious crafting components.
I. **Leveling Up:** Add training locations and wisend mentors to your game.
J. **Long Rest:** New rules and advice on using a week-long downtime period.
K. **Making a Journey:** Turn long-distance travel into a character-focused event with a *journey phase* and travelling responsibilities.
L. **Oils:** Splash magical oils onto your weapons and armor to upgrade them with temporary properties.
M. **Potions:** New potion rules and new consumables for players to find and buy on their adventures.
N. **Short Rest:** New rules for setting up camp and performing campsite activities.

GM: For our next game, we'll be playing the *Curse of Strahd* D&D adventure. I'll be using the *Short Rest*, *Long Rest*, *Class/Feature/Racial Changes*, and *Stress & Afflictions* plug-in modules as a starting point. Does anyone have any module requests?
Player A: I'd like to play a crafter—can we use *Active Crafting*? And *Arcane Jewels* to improve our gear?
GM: Yep—we can add in *Gemstones*, *Potions*, *Flasks*, and *Oils* as well for some crafting variety.
Player B: Does *Active Defence* mean the players roll more dice during the game?
GM: Yes—you roll instead of the GM.
Player B: That one, please—I've got this new, shiny d20 and it wants to be rolled.

B Dark

Dark modules make combat more dangerous and life more difficult for characters. Use these to darken the tone of your game or put a bigger strain on character resources.

A. **Dangerous Magic:** Make magic a bigger risk for your casters with magical burnout and consequences.
B. **Deadly Disease:** Turn sickness and plague into a serious threat with escalating diseases.
C. **Death & Resurrection:** Add persistent death saving throws, funerals, and new resurrection costs.
D. **Light and Shadow:** Manage light with abstract lighting levels and equipment.
E. **Stress & Afflictions:** Track the mental well-being of characters and any potential breakdowns.
F. **Survival Conditions:** Track the physical conditions—thirst, hunger, and fatigue—of characters and highlight survival resources like food and water.
G. **Wear & Tear:** Track equipment damage with *notches* and allow characters to repair and temper their gear.
H. **Wounds and Injuries:** Add some bite to your combat with lingering wounds, permanent injuries, and prosthetics.

C Astral

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

A. **Active Defense:** Replace monster attack rolls with player defense rolls to make your players feel more active and engaged during combat.
B. **Active Initiative:** Allow players to choose who acts next for more dynamic combat by replacing turn-based initiative with active initiative.
C. **Active Inventory:** Manage inventory with inventory slots and bulk.
D. **Active XP:** Reward players with XP for finding treasure and bringing it back to town.
E. **Character Creation:** Create new characters using a d100, 3d6, and a set of random tables.
F. **Class Changes:** Assorted tweaks and rebalancing to some class features.
G. **Feature Changes:** Assorted tweaks and rebalancing to general game features.
H. **Racial Changes:** Assorted tweaks and rebalancing to some racial features.
I. **Rookie Characters:** Create classless rookie characters for a low-powered, dangerous adventure.

Every Table is Different

Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons is a modular ruleset—tweak, replace, and cut out the 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—use whichever modules you think are the best fit for your own game and your players.

2

Creating Adventures

Adventurers are—willingly or otherwise— drawn into adventures. Ancient ruins, buried treasures, legendary monsters—great wonders and greater dangers await you in the vast, uncharted wilds.

But how do you embark on an adventure? And how do you build engaging adventures for your players?

This chapter introduces the *adventure cycle* and *flashpoints* to help you structure a basic adventure.

The Adventure Cycle

A typical adventure has a simple structure that helps guide the flow of story and gameplay. This outline—the *adventure cycle*—features six basic steps: hook, prepare, depart, explore, return, and recover.

1. **Hook:** A clear adventuring hook is established—an orc warlord in a nearby tower, a hidden treasure in a sunken tomb, an eldritch cult preparing a sacrifice.
2. **Prepare:** The party decides where they're going, how to get there, and what supplies they need to take.
3. **Depart:** The party journey to their destination, dealing with any incidental problems along the way.
4. **Explore:** At their destination, the adventurers do adventuring work—find the treasure, loot the tomb, hunt the monster, interrupt the ritual, etc.
5. **Return:** Once they achieve their goal—or run out of staying power—the party head back home (or to the nearest sanctuary).
6. **Recover:** Once safe and sound, the party rest up and recover before a new adventure cycle begins.

These adventure cycles can be scaled as large or as small as you need—a single adventure could take hours, days, weeks, even years to conclude. Once an adventure cycle is resolved, begin a new one.

A Fiendish Offering

Adventure (Long) | 3rd-level

1 HOOK Gnolls have kidnapped seven villagers from Brackenwood and taken them to the Shadow Temple to be sacrificed at the next full moon.

- **Goal** *(Rescue)* Find the gnolls and save the villagers.
- **Motivation** *(Escalation)* If the villagers are sacrificed, the gnolls will gain fiendish power from their god.
- **Deadline** *(Date)* Before the next full moon.
- **Reward** *(Reputation)* Saving the villagers will earn the party renown in Brackenwood.

2 PREPARE Gather supplies in Brackenwood and plan your travel. The villagers offer a gift of one healing potion.

3 DEPART Travel 1 day north into the Redroot Basin.

- **FP #1** *(Combat, Easy)* A fiendish blood elemental.
- **FP #2** *(Skill, Easy)* Cross a deep ravine.

4 EXPLORE Explore and ascend the Shadow Temple.

- **FP #3** *(Combat, Medium)* Gnoll bloodcatchers.
- **FP #4** *(Puzzle, Easy)* Open the Shadow Gate.
- **FP #5** *(Combat, Medium)* Thrak, a gnoll champion.
- **FP #6** *(Combat, Hard)* Rykks, a gnoll bloodmage. In addition, *(Skill, Easy)* free the villagers.

5 RETURN Travel back home with the surviving villagers, some of whom may need medical aid.

6 RECOVER Rest and recover in Brackenwood. If at least six villagers are rescued, a party is thrown in celebration—otherwise, a memorial service is held.

1 Hook

The first step in creating an adventure is to establish a clear hook—a reason for your players to leave safety and head out into danger. A good hook has four components:

1. **Goal:** A clear, concrete thing that the party can achieve.
2. **Motivation:** A reason for your players to care enough about this hook to pursue it. This is the most important part of your hook, so make sure to think carefully about *why* your players may want to do this adventure.
3. **Deadline:** An explicit deadline—after this point, the adventure automatically fails (or otherwise ends).
4. **Reward:** A reward for completing the adventure—such as gold, loot, or some kind of social change.

To get started with hooks for your adventure, consider the example categories below—or create your own categories to match your game and setting.

The party are about to visit a new village—Brackenwood—and the GM wants to create a new gnoll-themed adventure for them to encounter.

For inspiration, the GM rolls four times on the *Hook Components* table—their initial hook categories are: Rescue, Escalation, Date, and Reputation.

- **Goal:** (Rescue) The gnolls—members of the Cult of Blood—have kidnapped a number of villagers.
- **Motivation:** (Escalation) If the villagers are sacrificed, the gnolls will gain fiendish power.
- **Deadline:** (Date) The villagers will be sacrificed at the next full moon—time is ticking.
- **Reward:** (Reputation) Saving the villagers earns social renown and favor from Brackenwood.

The GM now starts to plan *A Fiendish Offering*...

Hook Components

d100	Category	Description
A GOALS		
01-10	Acquire	Recover, gain or loot something of value.
11-20	Create	Create a significant item, or ensure that a specific event takes place.
21-30	Deliver	Deliver something or someone to a location.
31-40	Destroy	Destroy something or someone.
41-50	Discover	Discover something thought lost, obscure, or uncharted.
51-60	Escape	Someone—or something—has you restrained or pursed, and you must try to escape.
61-70	Prevent	An event is about to take place, and you must stop it from happening.
71-80	Protect	Someone—or something—faces an impending danger, and you must protect them from harm.
81-90	Rescue	Someone is in peril, and you must save them.
91-00	Solve	There is an unsolved mystery, and you must find the answer.
B MOTIVATIONS		
01-10	Character	It's relevant to you—your drive, personal goals, or backstory.
11-20	Escalation	Something terrible will happen as a direct consequence if this adventure isn't resolved.
21-30	Favor	You want to do this adventure as a favor to someone.
31-40	Freedom	You want to do this because it will grant you a measure of freedom (social/financial/material/etc).
41-50	Fun	You want to do this because it sounds like fun.
51-60	Moral	You want to do this because it's the right thing to do.
61-70	Pressure	You are being coerced, threatened, or blackmailed into doing this.
71-80	Promise	You made a promise to someone—this adventure will help you keep that promise.
81-90	Revenge	You want to do this as a means of revenge against someone or something.
91-00	Reward	You *really* want the reward.
C DEADLINES		
01-20	Competition	Other people are trying to solve this adventure first—you must beat them to the end.
21-40	Countdown	You are on a strict timer—you must complete the adventure before the countdown reaches zero.
41-60	Date	You must complete this adventure within a certain time or before a specific date elapses.
61-80	Event	You must complete this adventure before a specific event occurs.
81-00	Resource	You must complete this adventure before you run out of a specific resource.
D REWARDS		
01-20	Financial	You will be rewarded with money and valuables—gold, gemstones, treasures, etc.
21-40	Justice	You will have the satisfaction of knowing that a wrong has been righted.
41-60	Material	You will gain an item of special significance.
61-80	Reputation	Your reputation with a person, faction, or location will change.
81-00	Social	You will change the social situation of one or more people.

2 Prepare

Once the party have taken the hook, it's time for them to start preparing for the adventure ahead. This often takes place within a sanctuary of some kind—a village, town, city, etc—where they are free to spend their time and wealth in five stages of preparation:

1. **Research:** Research information about the adventure, its antagonists, and its location. This might take the form of knowledge checks, social encounters, downtime activities, etc.
2. **Plan:** Plan how you're going to get to the site of the adventure—where do you need to go, how are you going to travel there, and how will you get back?
3. **Recruit:** Recruit any mercenaries, specialists, or animal companions that you think might be helpful on your adventure—torchbearers, horses, henchmen, etc.
4. **Gather:** Gather together any supplies you think will be needed on your adventure—maps, weapons, adventuring gear, rations, resources, etc.
5. **Review:** Review everything and decide if you're ready to embark on this adventure—or if you need to hold back and postpone it for another time.

As a general rule-of-thumb, try to keep three adventures on hand so that—if the party decides not to pursue one—you can easily switch to an alternative.

Before leaving Brackenwood, the party learn from an injured trapper the location of the gnoll's lair—the *Shadow Temple* of Redroot Basin...

3 Depart

The party leave their sanctuary and start travelling towards the heart of the adventure. This journey may take hours, days, weeks—even months—and there may well be dangerous foes and troublesome hazards ahead.

Travel is an important part of the adventure for three primary reasons:

1. **Worldbuilding:** Travel grounds your players in the setting. The more time spend travelling, the more time your players must spend interacting with the world—and each other.
2. **Skills:** Travel emphasizes exploration, and requires players to use their character skills in non-combat situations. Use this opportunity to test characters in new and unexpected ways.
3. **Anticipation:** Travel builds anticipation for the adventure hub—a good journey should hint at upcoming threats and villains with thematically-appropriate monsters, challenges, and environmental hazards.

This journey is an *introduction* to your adventure—so be careful not to treat it as simple, expendable, time-filling material. Seed the journey with hazards and points of interest that are directly related to the themes and threats of your adventure.

The party leave Brackenwood and head into Redroot Basin. There they discover that the Basin has been corrupted by the Cult of Blood—foul blood elementals stalk the earth and feed on living creatures.

4 Explore

Once the party reach the heart of your adventure—the *adventure hub*—it's time to be explorers. There are three typical phases during this exploration:

1. **Investigate:** The party investigate the adventure hub, coming into contact with lesser antagonists and various threats—traps, minions, guards, etc.
2. **Challenge:** The party come into contact with a significant threat—typically, the secondary antagonist of the adventure (a champion, an elite, a mid-boss, etc)—and a major conflict occurs.
3. **Crescendo:** Finally, the party come face-to-face with the primary antagonist. This is the climatic encounter where—typically—the players battle the *big bad*. Try to be cinematic and exciting as you plan your crescendo.

Once the party complete the primary goal of the adventure, it's time to start wrapping things up.

The party have reached the Shadow Temple. Four gnoll bloodcatchers stand guard outside, and must be distracted—or disposed of—to gain entrance to the inner sanctum.

Sinister red clouds circle the temple. With only 3 hours left until the full moon, time is of the essence...

5 Return

Once the party's exploration is complete—or they decide to retreat—they begin travelling back to their sanctuary.

Depending on the manner of their return—and whether the primary antagonist was defeated—this journey may be relatively uneventful. Use it as an opportunity to let the players celebrate—or reflect upon—their actions.

Six villagers have been saved from Rykks' bloodletting ritual. One survivor has taken a significant wound—the party must make a number of Wisdom (Medicine) checks to keep the wounded villager stable during the journey back to Brackenwood.

6 Recover

Finally, the party arrive back at their sanctuary—hopefully, in one piece—and resolve any immediate consequences of their adventure.

If successful in their goal, the party may claim any appropriate rewards. This brings their adventure to an end, and in doing so completes the adventure cycle.

Flashpoints

No adventure is complete without a variety of dangers to overcome—deadly battles, clever puzzles, tricky challenges, etc. Once you have the basic outline of your adventure cycle in place, it's time to start adding in some *flashpoints* to challenge your players.

To get started with flashpoints, there are three basic steps to follow:

1. **Get some Adventure Points:** Decide how long the adventure should last for your players. The longer your adventure, the more *adventure points* (AP) you'll have to spend on flashpoints.
2. **Add Flashpoints:** Spend your AP to add flashpoints to your adventure until you reach the limit.
3. **Build the Flashpoints:** Create your flashpoints with an eye for interesting synergies and themes.

1 Get some Adventure Points

First, decide how long you intend your adventure to last: short, medium, or long? The longer your adventure, the more flashpoints it can have—and the more effort it will require from your players to complete.

From the *Adventure Points* table below, you can see how many adventure points you have to spend based on the average level of your party. You gain more AP with higher level adventures—as characters gain levels, they gain resources (abilities, hit dice, wealth, etc) that enables them to take longer and more threatening adventures.

Adventure Points

Adventure Level	Adventure Points (AP)		
	Short	Medium	Long
1st-2nd	1	2	3
3rd-4th	2	4	6
5th-6th	3	6	9
7th-8th	4	8	12
9th-10th	5	10	15
11th-20th	6	12	18

The GM wants *A Fiendish Offering* to be a long adventure for their 3rd-level party. They have 6 AP to spend on flashpoints for the adventure.

2 Add Flashpoints

A *flashpoint* is an event that puts players at risk of losing valuable resources—health, gold, spellpower, time, etc. These are moments of high-pressure activity within your adventure cycle—your combat encounters, puzzles, and skill challenges.

To add a flashpoint to your adventure, spend a number of *adventure points*—the more dangerous the flashpoint, the bigger the cost. Keep adding flashpoints until you've spent all of your AP.

Flashpoint Cost

Difficulty	AP	Difficulty	AP
Easy	0.5	Hard	2
Medium	1	Extreme	4

With 6 AP to spend, the GM *could* simply add 6 medium-challenge flashpoints to their adventure.

Instead, the GM decides to mix things up—they create one hard flashpoint (2 AP), two medium flashpoints (2 AP), and four easy flashpoints (2 AP).

3 Create your Flashpoints

Once you have your flashpoints mapped out, it's time to start creating the specifics. There are three primary types of adventure flashpoint: combat, puzzle, and skill.

◇ Combat

A *combat flashpoint* is an event in which players battle against one or more opposing forces—a minor scrap against some guards, a fierce fight with a raging dragon, a climatic war against a lich and her undead army, etc.

For specific advice on creating combat flashpoints, check out the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (p81-87) and *Giffyglyph's Monster Maker* (p35-36).

◇ Puzzle

A *puzzle flashpoint* is an event in which players must solve a puzzle, trap, riddle, or other form of challenge—figuring out a secret code, answering the sphynx's riddle, pulling the levers in the correct order, etc.

◇ Skill

A *skill flashpoint* is an event in which players must use skills and ability checks to bypass a threat or hazard—unlocking a magic door, convincing a guardian to let you pass, disarming an explosive trap, etc.

For specific advice creating skill flashpoints, check out the *Skill Challenges* (p?) chapter.

The GM has 7 flashpoints budgeted for their adventure. For variety, they divide the flashpoints into 4 combat, 2 skill, and 1 puzzle.

Once the flashpoints are outlined, the GM generates the encounters and scenarios as normal.

Flashpoint Variety

When you create flashpoints for your adventure, try to keep things varied—a good adventure should test a wide range of character skills and abilities.

As a general rule-of-thumb, add one skill or puzzle flashpoint for every two combat flashpoints in an adventure cycle—or, in the case of skill and puzzle-focused adventures, two skills/puzzles for each combat flashpoint.

Adventure Paths

Sometimes, one adventure just isn't enough—stories naturally lead to more stories. When the party reach the end of the dungeon and defeat the evil dragon, only to discover it was being mind-controlled all along by a *mysterious power*—what happens next?

By linking adventures together, you can tell a larger, more intricate story over a much longer period of time. This is the *adventure path*—also known as a *campaign*.

To get started with adventure paths, there are three basic steps to follow:

1. **Get some Adventures:** Break up your story monolith into a collection of smaller, focused adventures with well-defined goals.
2. **Add Connections:** Connect your adventures to each other and outline the shape of your path.
3. **Be Flexible:** Be prepared to change your adventure path as you play—no path survives immediate contact with an adventuring party.

1 Get some Adventures

First, you need a set of adventures to feature in your path. There are two common starting points:

1. **Story Breaker:** You already have a large story in mind and you need to break it up into multiple, interconnected adventure cycles.

   Split up your story monolith into a variety of separate, achievable, well-defined goals—some optional, some mandatory, but each contributing towards the overall narrative. Each goal then becomes a separate adventure cycle for your path.
2. **Story Forger:** You've just finished an adventure and you want to extend the story with one or more new adventure cycles.

   These new adventures typically follow on from actions the players have just taken in the prior adventure—or actions they *plan* to take in the future.

Why Use an Adventure Path?

Adventure paths offer the following benefits:

- **Modular Storytelling:** Smaller adventures are easier to prepare, run, tell, and teach to players. Adventure paths help you to break up monolithic stories into discrete modules of focused adventure.
- **Reactive to Change:** When the story doesn't go in a direction you expected, it's easy to amend a path—simply remove (or replace) the problematic adventures and follow the narrative changes further down the path.
- **Easy to Update:** Adventure paths are easy to extend with additional content—or cut content when things need to wrap up faster than expected.

  Pay attention to the plot threads your players are most—or least—interested in, and update your adventure path to suit their character choices.

2 Add Connections

Connections describe how your adventures flow into each another. There are seven common types of connection—use these to turn your adventure cycles into a varied, interesting adventure path.

- **Introduction:** This adventure acts as an introduction to your path. Depending on your story, you may have multiple introduction adventures to reflect different narrative starting points.
- **Step:** This adventure leads directly onto one follow-on adventure.
- **Fork:** This adventure leads to a fork in the path with two or more options. Choosing one options means you can't choose another—so choose wisely.
- **Plaza:** This adventure unlocks multiple *separate* adventures that—typically—can be taken in any order.
- **Junction:** This adventure acts as the introduction (or other transition) to a separate adventure path. Nesting your adventure paths in this fashion can be a useful tool in modularizing your stories even further.
- **Loop:** This adventure can be repeated, or leads back to an earlier adventure in the path.
- **Ending:** This adventure acts as an ending to your path. You may have multiple ending adventures to reflect the choices your players may have taken on the path.

When you add an adventure to your path, make a note of any *prerequisites* that it may have—prior adventures, special items, NPCs, etc. This will help you—and your players—keep track of your path's connections.

> The villagers have been rescued, but Brackenwood is still in ruins—its future rests in the hands of the party. Will they help the villagers rebuild their home, or will they convince the survivors to relocate to Ravencliff?

3 Be Flexible

When you create an adventure path, keep one thing in mind—players will *never* do what you expect them to do. No adventure survives contact with the party unscathed.

An adventure path should give you—and your players—some *structure* in your roleplaying, but it shouldn't act as a straightjacket. If—and when—your players want to go off-path, that's usually a sign that your path needs to adapt. Be flexible with your adventures and change things around as necessary to reflect the choices of your player characters.

Simple Stories

It's very easy to overthink a story and turn a simple adventure into a complicated, multi-layer narrative. But if done without care, this can create a messy, linear story that's resistant—even *hostile*—to player agency.

The purpose of an adventure path is to create *interactive* fiction, not a novel—the more complicated your story, the more difficult it is for players to *change* that story in meaningful ways. When in doubt, default to a simple story with clear, easy to follow objectives.

Brackenwood Village

Adventure Path | 3rd to 6th-level

Burning Brackenwood (A)

Short | 3rd-level

Defend the village of Brackenwood from the fiendish Cult of Blood.

A Fiendish Offering (B)

Long | 3rd-level

Requires: *Burning Brackenwood (A)*

Rescue seven Brackenwood villagers from the Shadow Temple before they are sacrificed by the Cult of Blood.

The Mourning Rites (C1)

Short | 3rd-level

Requires: *A Fiendish Offering (B)*

Cleanse the corruption of Brackenwood's desecrated shrine so that any villagers killed by the Cult of Blood can be laid to rest.

We Must Rebuild (C2)

Medium | 4th-level

Requires: *A Fiendish Offering (B)*
Blocks: *We Must Relocate (C3)*

Travel to Ravencliff and convince Lady Valendor to help rebuild the village of Brackenwood.

We Must Relocate (C3)

Short | 3rd-level

Requires: *A Fiendish Offering (B)*
Blocks: *We Must Rebuild (C2)*

Convince the villagers to abandon their home in Brackenwood and move to Ravencliff.

Arcane Sanctuary (D1)

Medium | 4th-level

Requires: *We Must Rebuild (C2)*

Find out what's blocking the northern leyline and restore power to Brackenwood's magical tower.

The Golden Temple (D2)

Long | 4th-level

Requires: *The Mourning Rites (C1)* and *We Must Rebuild (C2)*

Recruit a Sun Cleric from Raftel and restore Brackenwood's temple.

Tools of the Trade (D3)

Long | 5th-level

Requires: *We Must Rebuild (C2)*

Recover Charsi's enchanted smithing hammer from the Forgotten Tower to forge magical equipment.

The Beating Heart (E1)

Short | 5th-level

Requires: *Arcane Sanctuary (D1)* or *The Golden Temple (D2)*

Use the resources of the rebuilt Brackenwood to discover the location of the revived Cult of Blood.

Bloodthirster (E2)

Medium | 5th-level

Requires: *Arcane Sanctuary (D1)* and *Tools of the Trade (D3)*

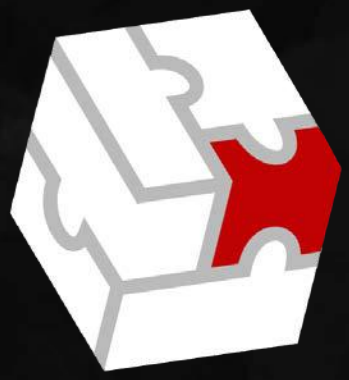
Create a powerful, bloodthirsty blade by summoning a demon and trapping its essence within a magical sword.

The Cult of Blood (F)

Long | 6th-level

Requires: *The Beating Heart (E1)*

Infiltrate the Cult of Blood and destroy the Beating Heart to end the Cult once and for all.



3

Trials

Not every encounter has to end up in combat—sometimes, your skills can be mightier than your sword. When you need to solve a lot of *small* tasks to overcome one *big* problem, you're in a trial.

This chapter introduces *Trials*, how to create them, and advice on how to run them in your games.

A Trial

In a trial, players seek to accomplish a goal by completing a series of smaller tasks. They do this by working together and making *ability checks*—the more successes they get, the more tasks they can complete. Too many failures, however, and penalities may occur—or the entire trial may be forfeit.

Trials can take any form—a chase through a bustling city, decrypting a necromancer's sinister spellbook, exploring a fetid dungeon, a parley with a formidable warlord, a war against an infernal army—so be creative.

Chansi, Valiant, and Clanda are trapped in the Storm Wilds, surrounded by a horde of animated shadows sent by the Twilight Crown.

In a clearing, Clanda discovers the broken ruins of an elven portal. Can the adventurers reactivate the portal in time to escape the attacking shadows...?

Using a Trial

Trials can help you to break up a large or *complicated* goal into lots of smaller tasks for players to overcome—use this as a means to give your puzzles, chases, explorations, and roleplaying sessions some structure.

Escape the Twilight Crown

Trial | Medium / Detailed

DC	Successes	Failures
15	20	○○○○○

Pace	Deadline
1 per Turn	10 Rounds

Goal

Fix the Storm Wild's fey portal to escape the Twilight Crown.

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** The party escape with a valuable prize—a captured, animated shadow.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** The party escape—just in time.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** The party escape—but suffer a significant loss.
5	**Major Defeat:** The portal is destroyed and the party are captured by the Twilight Crown.

Tasks

A Repair the Portal ○○○○
Restore the broken pillars of the portal circle.

B Harvest Spellpower ○○○○
Gather arcane fragments and spellpower.

C Cast the Ritual ○○○
(Requirements: A and B) Activate the fey portal.

D Hold Back the Horde ○○○○○○○○○○
Defend yourself from the attacking shadows.

Running a Trial

Once you have a trial mapped out for your players, it's time to put it into play. Follow these steps when running trials in your game:

1 Triggering a Trial

A trial can begin at any point—when a player tries to intimidate a formidable NPC, when a monster chases the party through a dark forest, when the rogue triggers a trap mid-combat, etc.

Once it looks like a trial is about to take place, announce it to the party.

GM: You hear the whine of arcane power building up in the metal sphere—this force bomb will detonate in less than one minute. Clanda—what do you do?
Clanda: I'm going to disarm the bomb, of course.
GM: Excellent—a risky gambit. A *trial* has begun...

2 Set the Stage

Now, you must set the stage. It's important to let the players know the *details* of their trial—if your players aren't aware of their situation, they can't enagage with it in a fun or meaningful way.

Describe the rough outline of the trial—the goal, the tasks, the expected outcomes, and the effective difficulty (DC, successes required, pacing, deadlines, etc.).

GM: This is a simple but *hard* trial—you need 5 DC 20 successes. If you succeed, you'll stop the bomb from exploding, if you don't...
Clanda: So, don't drop the exploding death ball? Got it. What do I need to do?
GM: You think there are three tasks: 1) carefully open the bomb casing, 2) decipher the arcane sigils within, and 3) countermand the spell.
Clanda: How long do I have?
GM: You think *maybe* 10 rounds—but you're not sure.

Limited Information

You may decide that *some* information is—at first—obsured to players. Consider allowing them to discover this information with appropriate Intelligence checks—or other checks as appropriate.

Mechanical Clarity

It may be tempting to hide the mechanical details of a trial from your players. However, this can lead to frustration—an unclear trial is a trial your players can't easily contribute to.

Ensure that players can interact properly with your trials by describing them with the same mechanical clarity as you would a combat encounter.

3 Making a Check

Whenever a player describes an action they are taking to resolve a task, the GM can ask that player to make an *ability check* against the DC of the trial.

Once the player makes their roll, check the *Trial Check Results* table below to see what the outcome is.

Open Skills: When you decide which ability check to ask for, use attributes and skills in *any* combination as best matches the player's action.

Advantage & Disadvantage: Depending on the situation and the action taken, you may choose to grant either advantage or disadvantage to the player's roll.

Trial Check Results

Result	Outcome
+10 or more	**Critical Success:** Choose one of the following: A. Gain two successes. B. Gain one success *and* remove one failure from the trial.
+0 to +9	**Success:** Gain one success.
–1 to –9	**Failure:** Gain one failure.
–10 or lower	**Critical Failure:** Gain two failures.

Clanda: Ok, first thing's first—lets crack open this case. Can I look for a weak spot in the plating and prise it open?
GM: That sounds like an Intelligence (Athletics) check to me—make a roll.
Clanda: Oof, athletics—not my strong point... (rolls 17) ...see? Sweaty hands.
GM: That's one failure—the casing remains intact.
Clanda: Blast. What if I use my tinker's tools?
GM: Those tools are perfect for a device like this—make an Intelligence (Tools) check with advantage.
Clanda: I knew these would come in handy... (rolls 23) ...ah now *that's* more like it.
GM: That's one success. You hear a slight click and part of the casing slides open—you can see some of the glimmering arcane sigils within...

Substitutions

Your players may have access to special resources—tools, spells, gear, allies, etc. When a player opts to use one of these resources, consider one of the following:

- **It helps the situation:** Grant a) advantage on a roll, b) one automatic success, or c) two automatic successes.
- **It makes things worse:** Grant a) disadvantage on a roll, b) one automatic failure, or c) two automatic failures.

Clanda: Can I use *Identify* to decifer these spell sigils?
GM: You think *Identify* might give you two automatic successes—but it'll take you one minute to cast that ritual. That's 10 rounds, and the clock is ticking...

Improvised Tasks

Your players may naturally improvise tasks of their own based the trial's description. Try to be flexible with your trial outline—if the players have a good idea, incorporate it as best you can.

Failure Consequences

Depending on the trial and the action taken by the player, you can apply a *consequence* if an ability check results in a failure—taking damage, spending hit die, burning spell slots, losing gold, etc.

> Clanda rolls a failure when trying to countermand the spell powering the arcane bomb. The GM decides to apply a consequence—arcane power lashes out and Clanda takes 2d12 points of force damage.

Making an Attack

Your players may opt to make an *attack* as their action within a trial. To resolve these attacks, don't use attack rolls or saving throws—instead, resolve them as a simple *ability check* based on the attack action described by the player. For example:

- A barbarian swings her axe with great power at an iron golem? Make a **Strength (Athletics)** check.
- A rogue shoots a crossbow whilst hidden in the shadows? Make a **Dexterity (Stealth)** check.
- An eldritch knight slashes a green flame blade at fearsome lich? Make an **Intelligence (Athletics)** check.
- A wizard casts *magic missile* with great haste at a charging dragon? Make a **Intelligence (Arcana)** check.
- A cleric casts *sacred flame* at a rampaging zombie? Make a **Wisdom (Religion)** check.
- A druid casts *entangle* on a group of rowdy kobolds? Make a **Wisdom (Nature)** check.
- A draconic sorcerer uses *burning hands* on a swarm of rats? Make a **Charisma (Arcana)** check.

Using Class Features & Abilities

If the player uses a relevant ability—such as a class feature, spell, or other resource—consider granting them advantage (or an automatic success) to the roll.

> To *hold back the horde*, Valiant wants to attack the overwhelming shadows of the Twilight Crown with his mace. The GM asks for a Strength (Athletics) check.
>
> Because Valiant has the *Divine Strike* passive ability—and the shadows are vulnerable to radiant—the GM grants advantage to the roll.

Choosing Attack Abilities

When you assign an ability check to a player's attack action, keep in mind the skillset of that character—try to use skills that complement the character well. Encourage players to describe actions in the context of their character skills.

4 Add Challenges

Trials are at their best when the narrative evolves with each ability check, expanding the story and encouraging a variety of abilities and skills. So if you find that players are relying on the same actions and abilities to solve a task, consider mixing things up with a *challenge*.

Describe a change in the narrative that puts one or more characters in a difficult—or perilous—situation. Use this opportunity to put the spotlight on a particular character, ability, or skillset.

> Valiant *could* simply use Strength (Athletics) each time to *hold back the horde* with melee attacks. But to keep things interesting, the GM decides to introduce some challenges. For example:
>
> - A giant shadow grabs hold of you with suprising speed, Valiant, lifting you up off the ground. You see sinister tendrils wrapping around you—what do you do?
> - A shadowmage calls out a piercing cry and encases you in a *twilight barrier*, Valiant. Dark sigils blind and restrain you—what do you do?
> - Thunder crackles ominiously as rain pours from the blackened sky. The ground beneath your feet is slick and tretcherous, Valiant—what do you do?
> - As you battle the horde, Valiant, one of the twilight crown sinks into your shadow. You suddenly stumble and fall prone as it tries to possess you through your own shadow—what do you do?
>
> Valiant must now describe a different action in reaction to the challenge which may require a different ability, skill, or feature.

5 Ending a Trial

No trial lasts forever. All things must end, and a trial typically concludes in one of four ways:

- **Victory:** The players have rolled enough successes to complete the trial. Check the trial's list of outcomes to see what happens next—the fewer failures, the better the outcome.
- **Major Defeat:** When a trial gains five failures, it ends automatically in a *major defeat*.
- **Expiration:** The deadline expires. This may result in a consequence—such as a *critical failure*.
- **Abandon:** The players abandon the trial to pursue another objective. Depending on the trial, this may result in a consequence.

> After some tense rolls, Clanda rolls 5 successes in her trial to disarm the arcane bomb. The trial ended with 2 failures—a *minor victory*.
>
> She disarms the bomb safely, but is unable to recover any information about who created it.

Building a Trial

Once you have an idea for a trial, follow these six steps to start building it:

1 Set the Goal & Outcomes

Your first step is to define the overall goal of your skill challenge—what is it the players are trying to accomplish?

You must then decide on the outcomes of the trial: what happens when the players succeed or fail in their efforts? There are four outcomes to any trial:

1. **Major Victory (0 failures):** The goal is achieved with exceptional results–the players gain additional benefits.
2. **Minor Victory (1-2 failures):** The goal is achieved.
3. **Minor Defeat (3-4 failures):** The players fail to achieve the goal *or* achieve it but suffer a significant penalty.
4. **Major Defeat (5 failures):** The players fail to achieve the goal *and* suffer a catastrophic penalty.

The goal of Krazak, Viridian, and Crackle is to explore a sunken crypt in the *Umbral Deeps*—rumored to be the lair of the necromancer *Jander Skull*.

1. **Major Victory:** The party find a secret stash of treasure. They recover 1000 gp, a scroll of *Raise Dead*, and a *Sword of LIfe Stealing*.
2. **Minor Victory:** The party explore the crypt. They recover 100 gp and a scroll of *Raise Dead*.
3. **Minor Defeat:** The party are overwhelmed by the undead, escaping with two levels of exhaustion.
4. **Major Defeat:** The party run afoul of *Jander Skull*. One party member is killed, and the others escape with two levels of exhaustion.

2 Difficulty & Complexity

Next, you must choose a baseline *difficulty* and *complexity* for your trial. The higher the difficulty, the harder it will be for your players to succeed in their efforts—and the higher the complexity, the more successes your players must achieve. Choose your options from the tables below:

Trial DC

Difficulty	DC	Difficulty	DC
Very Easy	5	Hard	20
Easy	10	Very Hard	25
Medium	15	Impossible	30

Trial Complexity

Complexity	Successes	Complexity	Successes
Simple	5	Detailed	20
Straightforward	10	Intricate	25
Involved	15	Complicated	30

Jander Skull is rumored to be a fledgling necromancer with a tretcherous, sunken lair. The GM decides to create a *medium / involved* trial—the party must make 15 × DC 15 successes to complete the trial.

3 Create some Tasks

Now it's time to break down the goal—and the required successes—down into smaller, narrative-focused tasks.

A *task* describes a specific objective that should (or *must*) be met by the players to accomplish the goal of the trial. Use these to create a variety of small, narrative challenges for the party to overcome during the trial.

After some consideration, the GM creates the following tasks for their 15 × DC 15 trial:

A. **Enter the Crypt** (2 successes)
Locate the secret entrance to the sunken crypt.
B. **Explore the Sunken Chamber:** (5 successes)
(Requirements: A) Navigate the twisting chambers of the sunken crypt.
C. **Battle the Undead:** (5 successes)
(Requirements: A) Defend yourself against the risen undead that roam the crypt.
D. **Defeat Jander Skull:** (3 successes)
(Requirements: A, B, and C) Battle the necromancer.

Requirements

Some tasks may have requirements—sequencing, tools, skills, abilities, etc. Add requirements where necessary to a) create a variety of challenges for the party and b) strengthen the narrative theming of your trial—try to highlight multiple skillsets whenever possible.

Task Themes

As a rule of thumb, try to put the spotlight on at least *two* sets of primary skills within each trial—the more skills you support, the easier you make it for players to participate.

Use the task themes listed below as a starting point to help you allocate some skill spotlights:

Task Themes

Theme	Primary Skills
Academic	History, Investigation, Medicine
Battle	Athletics, Stealth, Arcana, Religion, Nature, Perception
Exploration	Investigation, Athletics, Acrobatics, Nature, Stealth, Perception, Survival
Infiltration	Stealth, Deception, Perception
Magical	Arcana
Physical	Athletics, Acrobatics, Sleight of Hand, Stealth
Primal	Animal Handling, Nature, Survival
Social	Intimidation, Deception, Performance, Persuasion
Spiritual	Religion, Insight

Be Flexible

Try to leave some room for flexibility within your tasks—the more adaptable you make your trial, the more creative the players can be with their actions and inputs.

Update tasks—or replace them entirely—during play to help support the fiction described by your party.

3 Pacing & Deadlines

Next, choose a pacing and a deadline for your trial. The faster the pace, the more checks the party can roll within a certain time—the longer the deadline, the more time the party has to act.

Trial Pacing

Pacing	Checks	Pacing	Checks
Extra-fast	X per turn	Weekly	X per week
Fast	X per round	Monthly	X per month
Slow	X per hour	Yearly	X per year
Extra-slow	X per day	Decadal	X per decade

Trial Deadline

Type	Deadline	Type	Deadline
None	—	Hourly	X hours
Turns	X turns	Daily	X days
Rounds	X rounds	Weekly	X weeks
Minutes	X minutes	Yearly	X years

To round off their dungeon exploration trial, the GM chooses a pace and a deadline:

- **Pacing:** Exploring the crypt is a *slow* process—the party can make up to *2 checks per hour*.
- **Deadline:** The party have *2 days* before the crypt sinks into the swamp.

4 Failure Consequences

Finally, you may wish to apply an *immediate consequence* to your players when they roll a failure during your trial. Choose one (or more) of the following—or create your own unique consequences:

- Lose a number of hit points.
- Lose one or more hit dice.
- Lose your lowest/highest unspent spell slot.
- Gain a level of exhaustion.
- Lose an amount of gold.

The GM decides to apply a *consequence* to failed checks—a player loses one unspent hit die *or* gains a level of exhaustion if they have no hit die remaining.

5 Start Playing

Your trial is now ready—see *Running a Trial* (p14) to start putting it into play.

The Crypt of Jander Skull

Trial | Medium / Involved

DC	Successes	Failures
15	15	○○○○○

PACE ..... 2 per Hour

DEADLINE ..... 2 days

Goal

Explore a sunken crypt in the Umbral Deeps—the lair of the necromancer *Jander Skull*.

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** The party find a secret stash of treasure. They recover 1000 gp, a scroll of *Raise Dead*, and a *Sword of Life Stealing*.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** The party explore the crypt, recovering 100 gp and a scroll of *Raise Dead*.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** The party are overwhelmed, escaping with two levels of exhaustion.
5	**Major Defeat:** The party run afoul of *Jander Skull*. One random party member is killed. The others escape with four levels of exhaustion.

Tasks

A **Enter the Crypt** ○○
Locate the secret entrance to the sunken crypt.

B **Explore the Sunken Chamber** ○○○○○
(Requirements: A) Navigate the twisting chambers of the sunken crypt.

C **Battle the Undead** ○○○○○
(Requirements: A) Defend yourself against the risen undead that roam the crypt.

D **Defeat Jander Skull** ○○○
(Requirements: A, B, and C) Battle the necromancer.

GM: You stand on the edge of the swamp of the *Umbral Deeps*, wherein—you suspect—hides the sunken lair of *Jander Skull*. What do you do?
Crackle: I served a black dragon for years—I know my way around a swamp. Can I look for anything out-of-the-ordinary?
GM: Yes—though, being a small creature, you feel that your movement and vision will be hindered by the thick swamp.
Viridian: Jump up on my shoulders, Crackle—a little extra height might help you see better.

Chances of Success

When you create a trial, it's important to consider the party's chances of success—the higher you set the DC, the harder it will be for your players to pass the trial.

As a general rule of thumb, use the *Average Ability Bonuses* across the party as a starting point.

Average Ability Bonuses

Level	Average Ability Bonus		
	Unskilled	Skilled	Expert
1-4	+0	+3/+5	+5/+7
4-8	+0	+4/+7	+7/+10
9-12	+0	+5/+9	+9/+13
13-16	+0	+6/+10	+11/+15
17-20	+0	+7/+11	+13/+17

Chances of Success

Bonus	Chance of Success (%)					
	DC 5	DC 10	DC 15	DC 20	DC 25	DC 30
-5	55	30	5	—	—	—
-4	60	35	10	—	—	—
-3	65	40	15	—	—	—
-2	70	45	20	—	—	—
-1	75	50	25	—	—	—
+0	80	55	30	5	—	—
+1	85	60	35	10	—	—
+2	90	65	40	15	—	—
+3	95	70	45	20	—	—
+4	100	75	50	25	—	—
+5	100	80	55	30	5	—
+6	100	85	60	35	10	—
+7	100	90	65	40	15	—
+8	100	95	70	45	20	—
+9	100	100	75	50	25	—
+10	100	100	80	55	30	5
+11	100	100	85	60	35	10
+12	100	100	90	65	40	15
+13	100	100	95	70	45	20
+14	100	100	100	75	50	25
+15	100	100	100	80	55	30

Improving your Chances

A low ability bonus isn't the end of the world—there's (almost) always a way to improve your odds and help out in a trial. To boost your chances, consider the following:

- **Help/Assist:** Spend your action to *help* another character with their ability check, granting them advantage in their efforts.
- **Spells & Features:** Use special magics and character features to gain ability bonuses, advantages, or—depending on the situation—automatic successes.
- **Tools:** Use tools creatively to bypass tasks.
- **Creative Thinking:** Think outside the box and use your talents in creative ways within the scenario.

Variant Dials

If you want to customize *Trials* for your game, consider the following variant dials.

A Task DCs

Use *Task DCs* if you want to run a more *granular* trial with a variety of DC modifiers.

When you create a task for a trial that you think is notably easier or harder than normal, apply a relative DC modifier to it: easiest (-4), easier (-2), normal (+0), harder (+2), or hardest (+4).

The GM wants to use *Task DCs* with the *Crypt of Jander Skull* trial (DC 15). They apply the following modifiers:

- **Enter the Crypt:** Easiest (DC 11)
- **Explore the Sunken Chamber:** Normal (DC 15)
- **Battle the Undead:** Normal (DC 15)
- **Defeat Jander Skull:** Harder (DC 17)

B Spellpower Successes

If you want a more *precise* method for determining which spells can trigger automatic successes, use this *Spellpower Successes* variant.

To gain advantage or automatic successes on an ability check during a trial, a spell must be of a minimum level relative to the DC—as shown in the table below.

Spellpower Successes

DC	Minimum Spell Level		
	Advantage	1 Success	2 Successes
0-4	0	1	2
5-9	1	2	3
10-14	1	3	4
15-19	2	4	6
20-24	3	5	7
25+	4	6	8

GM: In the dank crypt, the risen undead groan and stumble out of the gloom towards you. What do you do, Crackle?
Crackle: Easy! They're no match for my 2nd-level *Dragon's Breath*... uh, I mean, I hope not. Are they?
GM: Let's find out. You breathe draconic fire at the advancing zombies—roll DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) with advantage.
Crackle: Please work, pretty please... (rolls 16) ...hah!

A Perfect Fit

If a spell is a perfect match for a situation, act as if it is +2 spell levels higher to determine if it should grant advantage or a success.

Trial Templates

To get you started with trials, here are some example templates you can use in your games. Use these templates as a starting point—adjust the difficulties, pacing, deadlines, and apply your own theming where appropriate.

A Chase

In a chase, the party are in hot pursuit. A monster running through a dark forest, a thief fleeing across crowded city rooftops, a pirate ship escaping across a stormy sea—when the party need to need to catch up with an evasive opponent, use this template.

Chase

Trial | Easy / Straightforward

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	10	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Turn

DEADLINE ..... 10 rounds

Goal

You are chasing after someone—or something—across some tricky terrain. Can you reach the target in time?

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You catch up with your target and gain a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You catch up with your target.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You catch up with your target—but at a significant cost.
5	**Major Defeat:** You lose track of your target.

Tasks

A **Track Target** ○○○
Keep the target in your sights.

B **Overcome Environment** ○○○
Overcome a hazard caused by the environment.

C **Close the Gap** ○○○○
Close the distance between you and the target.

GM: The flashbomb suddenly explodes—when your vision clears, you catch a glimpse of the assassin escaping into the crowded city. What do you do?
Viridian: We chase—right guys?
Krazak: Damn right we chase! No hesitation, I charge into the crowds after the assassin.
GM: Excellent—the chase begins! Krazak, make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to force your way through the immediate crowds.

B Craft

In a crafting trial, the party are being creative. Building a suit of armor, reforging the broken sword of kings, brewing a lethal poison—when the party are trying to create something, use this template.

Craft

Trial | Easy / Straightforward

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	10	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Hour

DEADLINE ..... None

Goal

You are trying to craft an item. Gather recipies, materials, and tools to put your creativity to the test.

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You craft the item perfectly, gaining a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You craft the item.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You craft the item—but it has a significant defect.
5	**Major Defeat:** You failed to craft the item and wasted the materials in the process.

Tasks

A **Prepare Materials** ○○○
Process the materials you need for your crafting.

B **Craft the Item** ○○○○○
Turn the materials into your desired item.

C **Apply some Finishing Touches** ○○
(Requirements: A and B) Apply some finishing touches and flourishes to the item.

Valiant: We've got the campfire burning hot, Chansi.
Chansi: Great. Lets cook up a batch of my family's special *phoenix stew*—that'll clear up all our exhaustion. I'll start cutting up the carrots.
GM: Excellent—the cooking begins! Chansi, make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check as you prepare the ingredients. You're proficient with cook's utensils, so you also have advantage.

Active Crafting

For additional crafting features—such as materials and recipes—see *Active Crafting* (p67). Allow your players to gather special materials, collect rare recipes, and forge items with crafting trials.

C Escape

In a escape, the party are trying to lose a pursuer. Breaking free from an eldritch prison, running across desecrated ground patrolled by soul-devouring wraiths, hiding in the mountains from a raging red dragon—when the party need to keep their distance from a foe, use this template.

Escape

Trial | Easy / Straightforward

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	10	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Turn

DEADLINE ..... 10 rounds

Goal

You are being pursed. Can you hide your tracks and open up enough distance to lose the hunter?

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You escape your pursuers and gain a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You escape your pursuers.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You escape your pursuers—but at a significant cost.
5	**Major Defeat:** Your pursuers catch up.

Tasks

A **Cover Tracks** ○○○
Cover your tracks as you make your escape.

B **Overcome the Environment** ○○○
Overcome a hazard caused by the environment.

C **Get some Distance** ○○○○
Open up some distance between you and your pursuers.

GM: The guard sneers at you from outside the cell, Viridian, throwing a ring of heavy keys casually in the air. "Enjoy your last night, hero—Lord Erasius likes his executions nice and early."
Viridian: I rather like my head where it is... I have to escape. I'll fake an illness to get the guard into my cell—then knock her out and steal the keys.
GM: Excellent—the escape begins. Viridian, make a DC 10 Charisma (Deception) check to fake a painful illness. As an actor, you have advantage on this roll.
Viridian: Perfect—I roll... (rolls 14) ...a success! As the guard leans over me, I throw a punch and grab the keys as she falls unconcious.
GM: You now have the keys to your cell, and one unconcious guard. No alarms are sounding—*yet*.
Viridian: I'd better hide this guard to cover my tracks...

D Heist

In a heist, the party are trying to take something from a location *in secret*. Stealing a diamond from a bank vault, rescuing an emperor from draconic kidnappers, taking a phylactory from a lich's lair—when the party are trying to acquire something without detection, use this template.

Krazak: Bah I say we storm the temple, punch out the priests, and steal the idol. It's for a good cause.
Clanda: Good cause or not, if the Church of Ilmater find out we stormed their temple we'll be in *serious* trouble. Is there another way, Zane?
Zane: There's *always* another way. A big temple has big shadows—we sneak, we steal, we *survive*.
Clanda: You think we can do a heist?
Zane: I could heist this in my sleep—*if* Krazak can get me the temple blueprints.
Krazak: I think I know a guy... Lemme have a drink with him, call in a favor.
GM: Excellent—the heist begins. Krazak, make a DC 10 Constitution (Persuasion) check while you drink.

Heist

Trial | Easy / Involved

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	15	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Hour

DEADLINE ..... 1 week

Goal

You are trying to pull off a heist. Can you get in, grab the loot, and get out without raising the alarm?

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You escape with the item and gain a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You escape with the item.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You escape with the item—but at a significant cost.
5	**Major Defeat:** You were discovered during the heist—bad things are about to happen.

Tasks

A **Make a Plan** ○○○○○
Put your team together, gather information, and acquire the tools/resources you need.

B **Execute the Heist** ○○○○○○
(Requirements: A) Infiltrate, locate, and acquire.

C **Escape Unnoticed** ○○○○
(Requirements: A and B) Get back out without raising the alarm.

E Investigate

In an investigation, the party are trying to learn something. Investigating a murder scene, uncovering the lair of a mythical beast, learning the secret handshake of an underground cult—when the party need to discover some information, use this template.

Investigate

Trial | Easy / Straightforward

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	10	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Hour

DEADLINE ..... None

Goal

You are gathering information. Can you turn clues and rumors into a solid conclusion?

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You gathered some information and a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You gathered information.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You gathered some information—but at a significant cost.
5	**Major Defeat:** You didn't gather any useful information—and something bad will happen.

Tasks

A **Gather Clues** ○○○○
Search a location and gather clues.

B **Ask Around** ○○○○
Talk to people and collect information.

C **Make a Conclusion** ○○
(Requirements: A and B) Assemble your scraps of information into a conclusion.

Truth: You think Sister Sedeena was *murdered*?
Valiant: If not, it's one hell of a coincidence. Sedeena wanted to tell us something—all of a sudden, the shrine catches fine whilst she's trapped inside? By *accident*? I don't buy it.
Krazak: Must be those damn Zhentarim again.
Zane: No, this is too sloppy for Zhentarim. No serious assassin trusts fire—a knife is *much* more reliable.
Truth: Then we need to find out who, and why. Valiant and Zane, see what leads you can find in town—Krazak and I will investigate the shrine. I'll start by asking the acolyte—Darcy Brin—what he remembers of that night...
GM: Excellent—the investigation begins! Truth, make a DC 10 Charisma (Investigation) check.

F Persuade

In a persuasion, the party are trying to get someone to do something. Turn against their master, release some prisoners, give up some vital information—when the party are trying to change an NPC's mind, use this template.

GM: The gnoll snarls at you, Viridian, as he presses a black knife to Clanda's throat. "Back off, devilspawn, or I'll slice her from ear to ear!"
Clanda: Better do as he says, Viridian—this wretch killed Vemi in cold blood.
GM: "I killed Vemi because she was a *butcher*," spits the gnoll, "and I'll kill you too if you don't shut your lying elven mouth." He's watching you closely with crazed eyes, Viridian—what do you do?
Viridian: I want to convince him to let Clanda go—I'm a talker, not a fighter. I'll try to calm his temper, tell him I'm only here to talk.
GM: Excellent—the persuasion begins! Viridian, make a DC 10 Wisdom (Persuasion) check to begin.

Persuade

Trial | Easy / Involved

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	10	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Turn

DEADLINE ..... 10 rounds

Goal

You are trying to change someone's mind. Can you do it without turning them against you?

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You persuade the target and gain a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You persuade the target.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You persuade the target—but at a significant cost.
5	**Major Defeat:** You were unable to persuade the target—something bad is about to happen.

Tasks

A **Make your Case** ○○○○
Put forward your case and make arguments about *why* your position is right.

B **Counteract** ○○○
Counteract your opponents arguments and prove them wrong.

C **Soothe and Enflame** ○○○
Manage the emotional state of your opponent through charm, intimidation, and insight.

G Quest

In an quest, the party are trying to achieve something grand. Recovering a treasure from a sunken lair, hunting a dangerous necromancer, gathering the four elemental crystals—when the party need to undertake an adventure, use this template.

Quest

Trial | Easy / Involved

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	15	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Hour

DEADLINE ..... None

Goal

You are on a quest. Can you reach the end and complete your adventure before misfortune strikes?

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You complete the quest and gain a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You complete the quest.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You complete the quest—but at a significant cost.
5	**Major Defeat:** You failed the quest, and something bad is about to happen.

Tasks

A Embark ○○○
Travel to the location of the quest.

B Explore your Surroundings ○○○○○
(Requirements: A) Explore the environment and solve any puzzles or obstacles that block your path.

C Battle Enemies ○○○○
(Requirements: A) Defeat those who would oppose you.

D Defeat the Boss ○○○
(Requirements: A and B) Defeat (or otherwise overcome) the big boss.

GM: What do you do in your downtime, Valiant?
Valiant: Well my temple has asked me to cleanse the Darkwood Shrine—is that something I can accomplish in a week?
GM: It's a ways north, but you think it's achievable.
Valiant: Perfect—I'll do that while everyone else is resting in town. I'll take one of the acolytes with me—they've been to the shrine before.
GM: Excellent—the quest begins! Valiant, make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check as you embark. The acolyte remembers the path—you have advantage.

H Unlock

In a unlock trial, the party are trying to open or disarm something. Cracking open a secret vault in an artificer's workshop, opening a set of locked diamond doors, breaking through a sealed fey portal—when the party are trying to bypass something, use this template.

GM: As the battle wages on, the eldritch portal crackles with purple lightning. You hear a gibbering roar as another four mouthers crawl through the aberrant vortex and into our world.
Truth: Damn, there's too many mouthers—we'll be overwhelmed if they keep pouring through! Clanda, can you shut down that portal?
Clanda: Sure—*if* you can keep them off my back.
Truth: You heard her, Krazak—let's clear a path.
Clanda: Alright, let's see what we're dealing with... I'll try to make sense of the sigils on the portal stone.
GM: Exellent—the unlocking begins! Clanda, make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check to gather information about the portal. Because you don't understand deep speech, however, you have disadvantage on your roll.

Unlock

Trial | Easy / Simple

DC	SUCCESSES	FAILURES
10	5	○○○○○

PACE ..... 1 per Round

DEADLINE ..... None

Goal

You are trying to unlock or disarm something. Can you bypass the restraints before something bad happens?

Failures	Outcome
0	**Major Victory:** You unlock the target and gain a bonus.
1-2	**Minor Victory:** You unlock the target.
3-4	**Minor Defeat:** You unlock the target—but at a significant cost.
5	**Major Defeat:** You were unable to unlock the target—something bad is about to happen.

Tasks

A Gather Information ○○
Gather information about the locks.

B Test the Defences ○○
Test the defences with some initial advances.

C Unlock ○
(Requirements: A and B) Attempt to unlock the target.

4

Dread

Powerful forces enact their will on the world, shaping reality to their whims. Gods, devils, archfey, sorcerer kings, old ones—these almighty beings inspire hope in their allies and dread in their enemies. But how do they enforce their power, and what happens when you try to defy them?

This chapter introduces *malevolent forces* and *dread*, and rules on how to include them in your campaign.

A Malevolent Force

When a powerful entity is working against you—or *you* are working against *it*—that entity becomes a *malevolent force*.

A malevolent force creates *dread* wherever it has significant influence—dungeons, temples, towns, realms, etc. It can use this dread to trigger *dreadful consequences*, fuel *dreadful attacks*, and enforce *dreadful edicts* to maintain power and punish creatures—like *you*—that would dare to challenge it.

Viridian, Krazak, and Zane enter Hellspire Citadel—a demon-infested keep under the malevolent influence of Baphamet, the Demon Lord of Minotaurs.

To demonstrate Baphamet's power and influence, the GM has allocated 40 points of *dread* and a selection of *dreadful effects* to use against the party.

Door Slam

Dreadful Consequence | Spooky

When a creature walks through an open door, you can spend 1 point of dread to make the door slam behind them and—if possible—lock.

Be the Big Bad

Almighty beings don't sit in silence while adventurers flaunt defiance—they curse, smite, judge, punish, and command the blasphemous, the impudent, and the disobediant.

When you want to remind your players that a *malevolent force* watches their every move, use *dread*.

Malevolent Forces

d12	Malevolent Force
1	**Abyssal Power:** An archfiend has turned their abyssal might upon you.
2	**Bad Luck:** Be careful because luck just isn't in your favor today.
3	**Dark Curse:** Someone—or something—has cast a terrible curse on this place.
4	**Death Touched:** Something is reaching out to you from beyond the grave.
5	**Divine Judgement:** A deity is trying to make life difficult for you with divine power.
6	**Draconic Fury:** An ancient dragon is exerting their will on this place.
7	**Eldritch Warp:** An unknowable force from beyond the stars is warping reality.
8	**Elemental Wrath:** A powerful elemental creature is turning the elements against you.
9	**Hellish Rebuke:** An archdevil is using infernal influence to thwart your efforts.
10	**Monster Lair:** A monster has turned their lair and its environment against you.
11	**Sinister Magic:** A powerful mage is turning arcane powers against you.
12	**Wild Hunt:** An archfey is toying with you for their own amusement.

Creating Dread

When you want to act as a *malevolent force* in your campaign, it's time to create some dread. To get started, there are four basic steps to follow:

1 Create a Dread Zone

Your first step is to a) choose a *malevolent force* and b) define a region where that force is creating *dread*.

These *dread zones* can be as small or as large as you like—a dungeon, a castle, a town, even an entire empire—so build one as best befits your adventure.

A malevolent force—the Hag Queen of Darkroot Forest—has cast a *Dark Curse* over the village of Westing, turning the villagers into wild werewolves.

To represent the Hag Queen's power in this region, the GM turns Westing (and the ajoining Darkroot Forest) into a single *dread zone*.

2 Assign some Dread

Next, decide how much influence your malevolent force has in this area—the more influence it has, the more dread it can create to spend on *dreadful effects*.

Dread Points

Influence	Maximum Dread	Influence	Maximum Dread
Fleeting	5	Powerful	40
Noticable	10	Indomitable	80
Unmistakable	20	Absolute	160+

Once dread is spent, it is gone—but not forever. You should decide how often your dread zone will spawn new dread. Choose a rate that is thematic and consistent with the pace of your campaign:

- **Significant Event:** Dread is created when a specific event occurs—a ritual sacrifice, the full moon rises, a certain word is said aloud, etc.
- **Periodic Interval:** Dread is created at a regular rate and time—hourly, daily, weekly, etc.

The Hag Queen's influence over Westing is *unmistakable*, so the GM assigns 20 points of dread to this dread zone with the following recovery options:

- **Event:** Regain all dread when the full moon rises.
- **Event:** Regain 5 dread when a creature is cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

The Hag Queen's influence is at it's strongest after the full moon—so beware, adventurers.

3 Choose some Effects

Now you can add ways to spend dread with *dreadful effects*. There are three common types of effect:

- **Consequences:** The malevolent force reacts to a player action, punishing them with a consequence.
- **Attack:** The malevolent force empowers a monster attack or dungeon trap with dread.
- **Edict:** The malevolent forces enforces a powerful rule that restricts certain action types.

For a quick selection, combine 1, 2, or 3 *dreadful effect packages* (p29) to build a rapid list of thematic options.

Westing is a cursed, spooky village under threat from a Hag Queen. The GM combines effects from the *Spooky* and *Feywild* packages to create a selection of 10 *dreadful effects*, including *Entangling Roots*.

Entangling Roots

Dreadful Consequence | Feywild

When a creature ends their turn after moving 5 ft or less, you can spend 1 point of dread to entangle that creature with magical roots. The creature is *Restrained* for up to one minute, and may spend its actions to attempt to break free early (Strength check vs DC 12).

Upcast: For each additional point of dread you spend, you can increase the DC by 1 (to a maximum of 16).

4 Start Playing

Finally, it's time to put your dread zone into effect. Spend your dread wisely, and try to act *in-character* as much as possible when you use *dreadful effects*.

Valiant, Clanda, and Chansi—in their search for the Hag Queen—are ambushed by a werewolf in the Darkroot Garden and must defend themselves.

GM: The werewolf snarls at you, Clanda, rabid slather dripping between its sharp and yellow teeth.
Clanda: No matter, one little firebolt... (rolls 8) ...will have absolutely no effect. *Excellent*. Chansi, you're up next—tame this wild beast, will you?

Clanda ends her turn without moving, fulfilling the requirement for the *Entangling Roots* consequence.

GM: Before Chansi can act... (spends 1 point of dread) ...the forest floor suddenly comes to life beneath Clanda's feet. Magical roots, animated by the Hag Queen's foul curse, wrap around Clanda's body—she is *Restrained*. The werewolf looks at the restrained sorceress with a hungry grin, and howls.
Chansi: Uh oh—that doesn't sound good...

Spending Dread

As a malevolent force, you can spend dread in three primary ways: to trigger *dreadful consequences*, make *dreadful attacks*, and enforce *dreadful edicts*.

When you create a dread zone, choose a selection of *dreadful effects* as best befits your malevolent theme.

A Dreadful Consequences

Dreadful consequences allow you to react to character actions in specific ways, creating new obstacles to make life more difficult, dangerous, and unpredictable.

These consequences can take any form—extra damage, spellcasting mishaps, sensory manipulation, cosmetic changes, etc—but should be appropriately themed for your malevolent force.

Abyssal Retribution

Dreadful Consequence | Abyssal

When a creature reduces a demon to 0 hit points, you can spend 1 point of dread to make the demon explode in searing flame. Each adjacent creature takes 1d6 points of fire damage.

Upcast: For each additional point of dread you spend (to a maximum of +2), you can increase the damage dealt by 2.

Necrotic Decay

Dreadful Consequence | Shadowfell

When a character would receive magical healing, you can spend 1 point of dread to reduce the amount healed by half.

Triggering a Consequence

When a creature meets the requirements for a *dreadful consequence*, you can spend dread to trigger that effect immediately. You may do this at will for as long as the malevolent force and dread zone are both in effect.

No Immediate Repeats: You can't trigger the same consequence twice in one round.

In Hellspire Citadel, Viridian, Krazak, and Zane fight a minotaur of Baphamet. With a skilled backstab, Zane reduces the minotaur to 0 hit points.

Zane: I thought these were supposed to be a *threat*?
GM: You suddenly feel the wrath of Baphamet bearing down on you, Zane. With demonic dread... (spends 2 points of dread) ...the minotaur bursts into flame. Both you and the adjacent Krazak take 7 points of fire damage from this *abyssal retribution*.
Zane: Hmm. Maybe I *shouldn't* provoke the overlord?
Krazak: Oh, *you think*?

Now that the GM has used *Abyssal Retribution*, they can't use it again until the start of the next round.

Creating a Consequence

To create your own dreadful consequence, follow these four simple steps:

1. **Define a trigger:** A dreadful consequence is *always* a reaction to a player action. Choose a triggering action from the table below—or create your own.
2. **Define a consequence:** Next, define the effect you want to take place. Choose an example type from the table below—or create your own.

   A consequence can take almost any form, and should (as a rule of thumb) target the triggering creature.
3. **Assign a cost:** Now assign a cost in dread points—the more severe the consequence, the higher the cost should be. Most consequences have a base cost of 1, 2, or 3 points of dread.
4. **Upcasting:** You may also wish to include an optional *upcasting feature*, allowing you to empower a consequence by spending more points of dread.

Keep in mind the theming of your dread zone and malevolent force.

Consequence Triggers

d100	When a creature...
01-05	Falls to 0 hit points.
06-10	Fails a death saving throw.
11-15	Casts a spell.
16-20	Makes an attack.
21-25	Moves adjacent to a specific creature/location.
26-30	Makes a Concentration check.
31-35	Receives magical healing.
36-40	Falls prone.
41-45	Gains a specific condition.
46-50	Moves less than 10 ft.
51-55	Moves more than 20 ft.
56-60	Takes damage.
61-65	Suffers a critical hit.
66-70	Deals a critical hit.
71-75	Speaks aloud a specific word.
76-80	Picks up an item.
81-85	Drops an item.
86-90	Is the target of a spell.
91-95	Fails an ability check.

Consequence Types

Type	Description
Afflict	Make a saving throw or gain a condition.
Harm	Take damage.
Displace	Forced movement.
Shatter	An item takes damage.
Wound	You gain a visible wound.
Manaburn	Lose a spell slot.
Drain	Lose a hit dice.
Bankrupt	Lose some gold.
Doom	Gain a failed death saving throw.
Exhaust	Gain some exhaustion.
Wildcard	Other.

B Dreadful Attacks

Dreadful attacks allow you to empower monster attacks and traps with dread, transforming the damage dealt or creating new and unique effects.

Use dread to add unexpected tricks to familiar enemies and to strengthen the connection between monsters and their overlord.

Abyssal Blade

Dreadful Attack | Abyssal

- **Attack:** STR vs AC.
- **Hit:** The target takes 1d8 + STR points of fire damage. You can spend one point of dread to deal an additional 1d8 points of fire damage.

Spectral Terror

Dreadful Attack | Spooky

- **Attack:** CHA vs Wisdom saving throw.
- **Hit:** The target takes 1d10 + CHA points of psychic damage. If you spend 2 point of dread, the target is also *Frightened* of you until the end of your next turn.

Creating an Attack

To create your own dreadful attack, follow these two simple steps:

1. **Create a Standard Attack:** First, create a standard attack for your monster that can be used without dread.
2. **Choose an Empowerment Phase:** Next, decide *when* you want to empower the attack. There are three primary options: 1) before you make the attack, 2) when you hit a creature, or 3) when you miss.
3. **Define an Empowering Modification:** Finally, decide *how* you want the attack to change when spending dread. Choose a modification base from the table below—or create your own.

Attack Modifications

d100	Spend dread to...
01-07	Increase the damage dealt.
08-14	Change the damage type.
15-21	Target one or more additional creatures.
22-28	Apply a status condition.
29-35	Target a different defence.
36-42	Reroll the attack.
43-49	Increase the critical hit range.
50-56	Regain some hit points.
57-63	Mark a target.
64-70	Gain some temporary hit points.
71-77	Regain expended spell power.
78-84	Move one or more creatures.
85-91	Apply a glaring wound.
92-98	Apply a failed death saving throw.

C Dreadful Edicts

Dreadful edicts are the purest manifestation of malevolent will. When you have gathered together enough dread, you can enact an edict and bend the rules of reality itself for an entire dread zone.

Demonic Silence

Dreadful Edict | Abyssal

While you have at least 20 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, divination spells and effects cannot be cast or maintained within your dread zone.

Latent Corruption

Dreadful Edict | Shadowfell

While you have at least 40 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, creatures cannot regain hit points within your dread zone.

An edict is a passive effect that—once enacted—remains in place until you either a) spend (or otherwise lose) too much dread, or b) dismiss it as a free action.

Enacting an Edict: It takes one hour (unless otherwise specified) to enact an edict, and you must have the requisit amount of dread for the entire duration.

Multiple Edicts: You can enact—and maintain—multiple edicts at once—so long as you have enough *cumulative* dread to cover the cost of each individual edict.

Targeted Creatures: You may freely choose which creatures are—and are not—affected by your edicts.

The Hag Queen of Darkroot Forest has two possible edicts: *Terror* (10 dread) and *Primal Grasp* (10 dread).

To enact one of these edicts, she must have at least 10 dread. To enact—and maintain—*both* edicts at the same time, she must have at least 20 dread.

Creating an Edict

To create your own dreadful edicts, follow these two simple steps:

1. **Choose a Severity:** First, decide how severe your edict is—the more severe the effect, the more dread it will require to enact and maintain:
   - **Minor:** (10 dread) Minor edicts apply a small penalty or disruption to a region.
   - **Moderate:** (20 dread) Moderate edicts are more noticable with larger penalities.
   - **Major:** (40 dread) Major edicts can change fundamental gameplay mechanics, forcing players to rethink their approach and plan new strategies.
2. **Choose a Rule:** Then, decide which rule should take place once the edict is in effect. Choose a rule from the tables below—or create your own unique effect.

Hope

Not *every* powerful entity wants to see you fail—some may have a vested interest in your survival and success.

When these almighty beings smile on you, there is a chance you may be rewarded with some *hope*—a token of their gratitude and a defence against dread.

Gaining Hope

As you perform services and duties for powerful beings—gods, archfey, old ones, etc—you may (depending on the generosity of your benefactor) be rewarded with one or more points of *hope*:

- **Minor:** You have performed some small or repetitive service to a greater power—a temple blessing, a minor sacrifice, a token offering, etc. You receive 1 hope.
- **Moderate:** You have performed beyond expectations in your efforts. Receive 1d4 hope.
- **Major:** You have performed a *significant* service to a greater power—completing a major quest, solving a large crisis, etc. You receive 2d4 hope.

Hope doesn't expire, but neither does it stack—when you are gifted with hope, you must decide whether to keep your old amount or gain the new one.

Valiant has 1 point of *hope* from his god, Kelemvor. During a week of downtime, Valiant dedicates his time to temple service and is asked to make a Wisdom (Religion) check—which he succeeds by +10.

Kelemvor deems that Valiant has done a *moderate* service and rewards the cleric with 3 points of hope. Valiant can only choose one pool of hope, and so he takes the larger pool of 3 points.

Spending Hope

When you are targeted by a dreadful consequence or attack, you can instead spend that many points of *hope* to protect yourself from the effect.

GM: The ghost screams at you, Valiant, with *Spectral Terror*. You take 7 points of psychic damage, and... (spends 2 points of dread) ....you are *Frightened*.
Valiant: Not today, ghost—I'll spend two points of *hope* to counter that dread. Good thing I did that temple service...

Limited Supply

Hope can give your players a pro-active means of taking action to protect themselves against dread. However, make sure to keep hope in limited supply—if it's too easy to gain hope, then dread will have no bite in your game.

Items & Consumables

Across your adventures, you may be able to buy, discover, craft, or loot special items that can help you to influence dread—magic gear, rare potions, sinister rites, etc.

Cursed Book

Item | Rare

A sinister book wrapped in dry, black leather. Strange runes flicker across its yellowed pages. If you stare long enough, the runes appear to spell out a sentence...

- **Khandar Estrada Khandos:** When you speak aloud a command phrase from this book within a dread zone, the reigning malevolent force regains 10 points of dread. The book then bursts into flame, causing 1d6 points of fire damage to anyone holding it before it turns to ash.

Amulet of Protection

Item | Rare

This amulet has been blessed by an almighty power. When you draw strength from it, you feel *hope*.

- **Shield of Hope:** This amulet has 3 charges of power. During your turn, you can use an action to spend one charge and receive 2 points of hope.

Liquid Hope

Item | Uncommon

A vial of glistening, diamond liquid. When you drink this liquid, you receive 1 point of hope.

Rite of Banishment

Item | Uncommon

A rite of power said to banish evil spirits. When you spend an action to perform this rite, the reigning malevolent force loses 3 points of dread.

Mask of Mischief

Item | Rare

A creepy, wooden mask that exudes an aura of dread. When you hold it in the light, the wood appears to shimmer with a chaotic, green glow.

- **Mischief Maker:** This mask holds 5 points of dread. While you are wearing this mask, you can spend this dread to trigger any *spooky* consequence.
- **Binding:** When you wear this mask, it binds to your skin. This mask remains bound until its dread has been fully expended, at which point it disintegrates into dust.

Malevolent Anchors

Malevolent forces typically maintain their powerful dread zones through special *anchors*—cursed rings, sinister cultists, arcane sigils, desecrated temples, etc. These anchors are a source of great strength and influence, but also great weakness—when an anchor is destroyed, a measure of dreadful power is forever lost.

When you want to add some exploitable weaknesses to your dread zones, consider using *anchors*.

Creating an Anchor

To create a malevolent anchor, follow these four steps:

1 Choose a Category

Anchors come in all manner of shapes and sizes, and there are three common categories—items, peoples, and places:

- **Items:** Magic swords, cursed books, powerful rings—these special items radiate with dread.
- **Peoples:** Elite cultists, demonic overlords, elemental princes—these creatures help to spread dread.
- **Places:** Desecrated temples, fey groves, elemental leylines, corrupted graveyards—these significant locations are bathed in dread.

Choose a variety of anchor types and descriptions that are flavorful for your dread zone and malevolent force.

2 Choose a Strength

The stronger the anchor is, the more it will increase your maximum dread—and the longer it will take to create. These strong, *valuable* anchors can be a tempting target to any cunning adventurer, so be prepared to defend them.

Anchor Strength

Strength	Time to Create	Maximum Dread
Lesser	2 days	+2
Greater	4 days	+5
Superior	8 days	+10
Supreme	16 days	+20 (or more)

3 Choose a Weakness

Finally, decide what must be done by an adventurer to destroy the anchor—for example:

- **Damage:** The anchor can be destroyed through damage—smashing, slashing, crushing, etc.
- **Purification:** The anchor can be purified in some means—consecration, an exorcism, an arcane ritual, etc.
- **Quest:** The anchor can only be destroyed in a specific way—cast into the fire of a volcano, stabbed by a shadowblade, put into direct sunlight, etc.

4 Update your Dread

When you use *malevolent anchors*, the maximum available dread is equal to the sum of all currently active anchors—update this value when you finish creating a new anchor.

The GM wants to use *malevolent anchors* for their Westing dread zone. They create the following anchors (giving the Hag Queen a total of 20 maximum dread) and spread them across the adventure for the players to encounter:

- **Dire Werewolf (x2):** +5 max. dread (each).
- **Fey Totem (x5):** +2 max. dread (each).

During their exploration of the Darkroot Forest, the party discover a *fey totem* hidden in a wild grove. When they successfully destroy the totem, the Hag Queen's maximum dread is reduced from 20 to 18.

It will take the Hag Queen 2 days to create a new fey totem as a replacement.

The Linchpin

A malevolent force can be tied to a dread zone by one anchor in particular—the *linchpin*. This linchpin serves as a direct conduit between the world and your almighty power, and is extremely precious—destroying it will vanquish the dread zone in one fell swoop.

There are a variety of linchpin types—choose one as best befits your adventure from the examples below, or create your own:

- **Mortal Avatar:** A single avatar acts as the conduit. These avatars are typically chosen, gifted, blessed, or possessed—willingly or otherwise.
- **Artifact:** A powerful artifact ties the force to this world.
- **Place:** A place has been turned into a font of power.
- **Sigil:** A spell sigil has been inscribed somewhere, drawing in otherworldly power.
- **Oath:** A powerful oath binds a power to the realm.

The *Dark Curse* over Westing is held in place by a linchpin anchor—a *spell sigil* written in blood in the Hag Queen's hut.

If this spell sigil is discovered and destroyed, the *Dark Curse*—and the associated dread zone over Westing—will be vanquished.

Sidequest Material

Malevolent anchors serve three in-game purposes:

1. To flesh out the lore and theming of your dread zone.
2. To provide a narrative, physical representation of malevolent power that players can experience and interact with.
3. To expose weaknesses in your Big Bad—weaknesses that your cunning players can exploit by hunting down and destroying these sidequest-friendly anchors.

When you want to give your players a range of sidequests to combat dread, put some anchors into your game.

Campaign Integration

Dread can be a powerful tool in a campaign, helping you to dive deeper into the theming of an almighty being whilst adding new challenges—and threats—for your players.

Listed below are some ways you can integrate this feature into your game, either as some light flavor or as a solid basis for an entire campaign.

A A Light Touch

This malevolent force has *limited* influence in a particular region. With only 5-10 points of dread, your ability to trigger *dreadful effects* is greatly restricted—so choose your moments carefully.

Pick this option when you want to a) add some light flavor to an adventuring space or b) remind players that they are being watched by a powerful entity.

The party are travelling through an old, long ruined shrine to Tiamat. The GM wants to hint at Tiamat's limited—but lingering—influence here, and so assigns a mere 5 points of dread and a couple of effects.

B A Powerful Presence

This malevolent force has *formidable* influence in a particular region. With 20-80 points of dread, your ability to complicate life is noticable—and dangerous.

Use this option when you want players to be actively concerned about dread, taking actions to learn about it and minimise—or counter—the harm.

Announcing Dread

When you include dread in your game, try to communicate it clearly to your players—in particular, how it may harm them and how they can counter it.

- **Foreshadow:** When you describe a dread zone to your players, try to hint at it in your descriptions—such as with the keyword "dreadful".
- **Rumors:** Use your NPCs to deliver information—and warnings—about local dread zones and their effects.
- **Research:** Allow your players to perform research on suspected *dreadful* locations during their downtime.

  With appropriate successes, you may decide to reveal some information—such as the current maximum dread, the range of dreadful effects, and the location of malevolent anchors.
- **Experience:** If players enter a dread zone unwittingly, consider asking them to make a relevant ability check to detect a malevolent, dreadful presence.

When in doubt, err on the side of giving your players *too much information* about your dread zones—the more information your players have, the more pro-active and engaged they can be with your content.

Baphamet, the Demon Lord of Minotaurs, has a powerful influence over the demon-infested, ruined keep of Hellspire Citadel.

The GM creates a set of malevolent anchors to represent Baphamet's control in this region, giving the Demon Lord a maximum of 40 points of dread:

- **The Horn of Baphamet:** +20 max. dread.
- **Ag'thorath the Defiler:** +10 max. dread.
- **The Hellspire Shrine:** +5 max. dread.
- **The Black Armory:** +5 max. dread.

C The Impossible Lair

This malevolent force has taken absolute control of a particular region. With 160 (or more) points of dread and a full range of dreadful effects—in addition to the regular assortment of monsters, tricks, and traps—this is a formidable (if not fatal) challenge for a fully-stocked adventuring party.

While the party can attempt to conquer this impossible lair at *any* time, they are encouraged to explore the land, hunt malevolent anchors, and defeat them to reduce the overall threat of the impossible lair.

Use this option when you want a solid basis for an exploration-forcused sandbox campaign (such as a *West Marches* game).

An evil sorcerer-king—Calamity Shrike—has taken absolute control of the kingdom of Highrune and now spreads corruption from his Throne of Power in the ruined palace. With 160 points of dread—and a full host of monsters—Calamity Shrike is merciless to any who would dare enter the Corrupt Palace of Highrune.

The players can attempt to attack Calamity Shrike straight away—*or* they may choose to visit the four *Divine Beasts*, cleanse the corrupted shrines, and hunt the *Aspects of Calamity* to reduce the effects of Calamity's dread:

- **Divine Beasts (×4):** +20 max. dread (each).
- **Aspect of Calamity (×4):** +10 max. dread (each).
- **Greater Corrupt Shrine (×6):** +5 max. dread (each).
- **Lesser Corrupt Shrine (×5):** +2 max. dread (each).

Pursing all of these optional sidequests will (in addition to regular rewards such as loot, xp, and gold) reduce Calamity Shrike's dread to zero, making this impossible lair a *much* more achievable goal.

Effect Packages

To help you get started with dread, the following pages include a selection of *effect packages* containing themed consequences, attacks, and edicts. Use these to help create your dread zones, or as inspiration for your own themed effects.

Spooky

Dreadful Effects

From haunted houses and ghostly graveyards to creepy forests and sinister, sacrifical temples—when you want to unnerve, confuse, frighten, and worry your players, try using some *spooky* effects to make them question reality.

CONSEQUENCES

1. **Door Slam**
When a creature walks through an open door, you can spend 1 point of dread to make the door slam behind them and—if possible—lock.

2. **Ghostly Reflection**
When a creature looks into a reflective surface—such as a mirror, a pool of water, a glass window—you can spend 1 point of dread to make that creature see a ghostly figure standing behind them in the reflection.

3. **Restless Sleep**
When a creature attempts to sleep, you make spend 1 point of dread to give that character restless dreams. The creature must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw—if it fails, the creature gains no benefit from its sleep. If it critically fails, the creature also gains 1 level of exhaustion.

4. **Horrifying Scream**
When a character ends their turn, you can spend 1 point of dread to make them hear a horrifying scream from a direction of your choosing.

5. **Sudden Movement**
When a creature begins their turn, you can spend 1 point of dread to make something unnatural appear to move within their eyeline.

6. **Distracting Whispers**
When a creature takes damage, you can spend 2 points of dread to make them hear distracting, ghostly whispers. The creature has disadvantage on Concentration checks until the start of its next turn.

7. **Sudden Chill**
When a creature enters a room, you can spend 1 dread to drop the temperature within the room down to freezing. This effect lasts for up to one minute.

8. **I See Dead People**
When a creature starts their turn, you can spend 1 dread to make them percieve one other creature as a grotesque, mutilated zombie. The creature no longer counts as an ally. This effect lasts until the start of the creature's next turn.

9. **Mocking Laugh**
When a creature misses with a weapon attack, you can spend 1 point of dread to have them hear mocking, sinister laughter in a direction of your choice.

10. **Thunderstrike**
When a creature says something particularly disagreeable or offensive, you can spend 2 points of dread to strike the ground adjacent to them with a lightning bolt.
Any creature adjacent to the strike must make a DC 15 dexterity saving throw—on a failure, the creature suffers 2d6 points of lightning damage.

ATTACKS

11. **Freezing Blood**
Your enemy's blood turns to ice in their veins.
- **Attack:** STR vs. AC
- **Hit:** The target takes 2d6 + STR points of psychic damage. If you spend 1 point of dread, you deal an additional 1d6 points of cold damage.
Upcast: For each additional point of dread you spend (to a maximum of +2), you can increase the damage dealt by 2.

12. **Spectral Terror**
With a terrifying scream, you inspire fear and dreadful terror in your enemy.
- **Attack:** CHA vs. Wisdom saving throw
- **Hit:** The target takes 1d10 + CHA points of psychic damage. If you spend 2 point of dread, the target is also Frightened of you until the end of your next turn.

13. **Frightful Retreat**
Your dreadful presence causes your enemy to step back from you in fear.
- **Attack:** CHA vs. AC
- **Hit:** The target takes 1d10 + CHA points of psychic damage. If you spend 1 point of dread, you move the target 10 ft backwards.

EDICTS

14. **Terror**
When you have at least 10 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, any creature who makes a saving throw against *Frightened* does so with disadvantage.

15. **Paralyzing Fear**
When you have at least 20 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, any creature who gains the *Frightened* condition is also *Paralyzed* until the end of their next turn.

16. **Heart Attack**
When you have at least 40 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, any creature who is reduced to 0 hit points will immediately fail any remaining death saving throws and die.

Abyssal

Dreadful Effects

From corrupt shrines and demonic dungeons to twisted cities and hellish cults—when you want to burn, brand, possess, and corrupt your players, try *abyssal* effects.

CONSEQUENCES

1. **Flamewarp**
When a creature moves adjacent to a demon, you can spend 1 point of dread to magically teleport the demon up to 20 ft to an unoccupied space it can see.

2. **Enrage**
When a creature hits a demon with a weapon attack, you can spend 1 point of dread to enrage the demon. It has advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during its next turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the end of its next turn.

3. **Abyssal Retribution**
When a creature reduces a demon to 0 hit points, you can spend 1 point of dread to make the demon explode in searing flame. Each adjacent creature takes 1d6 points of fire damage.
Upcast: For each additional point of dread you spend (to a maximum of +2), you can increase the damage dealt by 2.

4. **Possession**
When a creature falls unconcious, you can spend 3 dread to attempt to possess it. The creature must make a Charisma saving throw (DC 14)—if it fails, the creature is possessed by you.
While possessed, you determine the creature's actions. The creature gains 20 temporary hit points and remains possessed by you until these temporary hit points are lost—or you willingly give up control. The creature is unaware of any actions you take during this possession.
If a creature successfully defends against this effect—or the possession ends—it is immune to this effect for the next 24 hours.
Upcast: For each additional point of dread you spend (to a maximum of +2), you can increase the DC by 1.

5. **Mark of Corruption**
When a creature is critically hit by a weapon attack from a demon, you can spend 1 dread to mark their body with a glowing brand of abyssal corruption. This brand lasts for 24 hours.

6. **Demonic Wrath**
When a creature says something particularly disagreeable or offensive, you can spend 2 points of dread to strike the ground adjacent to them with a lightning bolt.
Any creature adjacent to the strike must make a DC 15 dexterity saving throw—on a failure, the creature suffers 2d6 points of lightning damage.

7. **Burning Blood**
When a creature enters a room, you can spend 1 dread to raise the temperature within the room up to boiling. This effect lasts for up to one minute.

8. **Immolation**
When a creature dies, you can spend 1 dread to burn their body with demonic hellfire, turning their remains (and any non-magical items) into ash.
Upcast: For each additional point of dread you spend, you can destroy one magical item of your choice carried by the creature.

9. **Abyssal Visions**
When a creature begins their turn, you can spend 1 dread to inflict upon them a sudden—and painful—vision of the demonic abyss. You may choose what this vision is.

ATTACKS

10. **Searing Touch**
Your enemy's blood burns white hot at your touch.
- **Attack:** STR vs. AC
- **Hit:** The target takes 2d6 + STR points of bludgeoning damage. If you spend 1 point of dread, you deal an additional 1d6 points of fire damage.
Upcast: For each additional point of dread you spend (to a maximum of +2), you can increase the damage dealt by 2.

11. **Heatstroke**
You flare demonic heat from your body to overwhelm and exhaust your enemy.
- **Attack:** CON vs. Constitution saving throw
- **Hit:** The target takes 1d10 + CON points of fire damage. If you spend 2 points of dread, the target gains one level of exhaustion.

EDICTS

12. **Conflagration**
When you have at least 10 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, any creature who suffers fire damage takes 2 additional points of fire damage.

13. **Demonic Silence**
While you have at least 20 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, divination spells and effects cannot be cast or maintained within your dread zone.

14. **Heat Exhaustion**
When you have at least 40 unspent points of dread, you can enact this edict. While it is in effect, any creature who gains one level of exhaustion instead gains *two* levels.

PART 2

Your Character

5 Character Creation p33
Create randomised 1st-level characters.

6 Feature Changes p38
A variety of tweaks and balance updates.

7 Racial Changes p40
Small updates to some racial features.

8 Class Changes p41
Small updates to some class features.

9 Rookie Characters p49
Run 0th-level adventures with rookies.

Character Creation

Before you can begin your adventures in the uncharted wilds, you'll need a character. D&D characters are larger-than-life, capable of great heroics and incredible feats—but how do you make one?

This chapter introduces ways to randomize character creation in your game with a collection of variant dials.

Random Characters

We don't always get to choose where we start in life—sometimes we just have to cross our fingers, roll the dice, and see what happens. Randomizing your character creation can result in some unusual character concepts, 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.

1 Race

First, determine your character's race by rolling a d100 and checking the *Character Races/Subrace* tables.

Character Race

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

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

Some races may have additional choices to make—ancestry, proficiencies, languages, etc. Pick these at random using the tables listed in *Appendix A* (p153).

Random Weightings

The options listed in these tables are not weighted equally, so some options—such as human, elf, and dwarf—will be more common than others. However, feel free to modify these weightings to better suit your own game and campaign setting.

2 Background

Next, roll on the *Character Background* table below to find out what your character used to do in the past. Your background represents a career, occupation, or experience which left a profound mark on your character and helped shape them into the person they are today.

You gain proficiencies and languages from your background, but you don't gain any equipment or special background features.

Background Choices: If you need to make additional choices as part of your background—tool proficiencies, specialties, languages, etc—then pick these at random.

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

Characteristics

Once you know your particular background, use the PHB characteristics tables to randomly determine your trait, ideal, bond, and flaw.

3 Class

Now that 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.

You gain the features, skills and proficiencies of your class, but you don't gain any class equipment.

Class Choices: If you need to make additional choices as part of your class—skills, tools, languages, etc—you can generate these randomly, rerolling any duplicates.

Character Class

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

Spellcasting

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

Class Specializations

Class	d100	Specialty	d100	Specialty
Cleric	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	01-16	Archery	65-80	Protection
	17-32	Defense	81-96	Two-Weapon
	33-48	Dueling	97-00	Choose
	49-64	Great Weapon	—	—
Sorcerer	01-19	Divine Soul	58-76	Storm Sorcery
	20-38	Draconic Blood	77-95	Wild Magic
	39-57	Shadow Magic	96-00	Choose
Warlock	01-19	Archfey	58-76	Great Old One
	20-38	Celestial	77-95	Hexblade
	39-57	Fiend	96-00	Choose

A player is asked to create a randomised 1st-level character. They first roll on the race, background, and class tables—they are *Viridian*, a tiefling noble bard.

4 Ability Scores

Now that you've defined who your character is, it's time to see how capable they are. Follow the five steps below to 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 ability score of your choice and keep the best result.
3. **Swap:** After your reroll, you may then make one swap of any two attribute scores.
4. **Racials:** Apply your racial bonuses as per normal.
5. **Modifiers:** Finally, calculate your *Ability Modifiers*.

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.

Ability Scores and Modifiers

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

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, generates his character ability scores using the five steps:

1. **Roll:** He rolls 3d6 six times to generate an array: [STR 14, DEX 13, CON 9, INT 8, WIS 10, CHA 5].
2. **Reroll:** CHA 5 isn't great, especially for a bard, so he makes one reroll: CHA 15—*much* better.
3. **Swap:** Viridian then has a difficult choice to make: he doesn't want high STR, but does he swap it with CON or INT? He chooses to prioritize INT and swaps it with STR to make [STR 8, INT 14].
4. **Racials:** Viridian then adds his racial modifiers—+1 INT and +2 CHA—to make [INT 15, CHA 17].
5. **Modifiers:** Finally, he calculates his total Ability Modifiers as shown below.

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

Viridian is a quick-witted and skilled charmer with a sly, lyrical flair. Well-read and charismatic, he knows how to use words to get what he wants.

He hates any sort of manual labor, however, and—while he loves a good drink—gets drunk *very* quickly.

5 Character Details

Now that you've established the outline of who your character is, you can start to define their more personal details—what do they look like, what drives them, and what do they want in life?

Appearance & Family

Use the tables below to establish some basic features and backstory. You may then define the particulars 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

Some of the character details listed here (age, weight, height, etc.) are relative to your particular race. A *very short* elf is very short by elf standards, for example, 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—create your own to add something new into the world, or use existing lore to anchor your character to the setting.

Character Age: 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).

Character Memories

d100	Memory	Description
01-08	Achievement	A goal you helped complete
09-16	Anger	A time you felt incandescent rage
17-24	Conflict	Someone opposed you
25-32	Disappointment	Expectations weren't met.
33-40	Fear	A moment of pure terror
41-48	Friendship	A close bond forged or tested
49-56	Greed	A time you succumbed to greed
57-64	Happiness	A moment of pure joy
65-72	Loss	Something precious was taken
73-80	Love	A love gained or lost
81-88	Pride	You made someone proud
89-96	Trauma	A deeply distressing experience

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 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 notable habit of some kind—speaking too loud, constant fidgeting, collecting 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 GM.

Character Quest

d100	Quest	Description
01-10	Acquire	To take possession of a specific 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

Viridan is tall and thin, despite a habit of *constantly* snacking on whatever's close to hand. He has a distinctive noble accent that becomes more pronounced when he's angry.

One day, Viridian hopes to meet the legendary bard *Vandielle d'Blush* and gain her seal of approval.

6 Feature Tweaks

This supplement includes a variety of racial, class, and feature changes—such as languages, initiative, and darkvision—to help better support a low-powered, dangerous, or darker tone of gameplay.

If the *Feature Changes* (p38), *Racial Changes* (p40), and/or *Class Changes* (p41) modules are being used in your game, read through the relevant chapters to see if you need to update anything for your new character.

7 Buy Equipment

Now it's time to equip your character. You don't start with any notable gear from your background or class—instead, you start with an amount of gold as 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 starting equipment and supplies appropriate for your character and campaign. Your character may also incur living costs during their downtime, so you might want to keep some gold spare.

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

Random vs. Static

The GM 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.

8 Take a Fate Point

Fate points (p125) 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.

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.

Variant Dials

If you don't want to use *fully* randomized characters in your game—or you just want to change character creation in some small ways—try some of these variant dials.

A 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

You must randomly generate *one* element of your choosing: your race, background, or class. You may pick the remaining two elements manually as normal.

◇ One Free Reroll

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

◇ One Free Selection

After randomly generating your race, background, and class, you may replace one element of your choosing with a manual selection.

◇ Opt-in Randomizer Rewards

You may pick your race, background, and class manually. But if you decide to randomly generate an element, you gain a reward—the more elements that you choose to randomize, the bigger the final reward.

Opt-in Rewards

Tier	Randomized	Reward
Apprentice	One element	10 gp
Initiate	Two elements	10 gp and 1 skill point
Artisan	All three elements	10 gp, 1 skill point, and 1 ability point

This 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 can't raise an ability score above 15 before applying racial modifiers.

◇ Roll Twice, Pick Once

When you roll for your race, background, and class, you may roll twice and pick the preferred result.

B Randomized Magic

This option randomizes the magic selection for spellcasters—good 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 of your cantrips for a different cantrip of your choosing.

C Ability Arrays

These options allow you to customize how players generate their ability arrays.

◇ Higher-powered Rolls

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

◇ Roll in any Order

Instead of rolling your ability scores in order, you may assign your scores in whichever order you 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 GM 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 your ability scores, you take an array of values and assigns them manually to your abilities. The DM chooses the starting power level for the game:

Static Arrays

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

D 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.

◇ 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

You may only take racial feats. If no appropriate feats are available, you may (with the DM's agreement) reskin an existing feat *or* create one to highlight a racial feature.

◇ The Blacklist

If you want to include feats in your game but exclude some of the more troublesome ones, apply a blacklist.

Example Blacklist

Players may not take any of the following feats.

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

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Feature Changes

To better support a darker, more dangerous tone—and to address balance issues—this chapter introduces a variety of feature tweaks and changes across a range of character topics.

Though these changes are *recommended*, they are not mandatory—pick and choose the feature changes that best suit your game.

Alignment

When you choose your character alignment, ignore any racial alignment restrictions or suggestions—as a mortal creature, you can decide your own morality.

Animal Handling

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

Roll Intelligence (Animal Handling) to recall information about animals, Wisdom (Animal Handling) to understand and soothe animals, or Charisma (Animal Handling) to charm, dominate, and control animals.

Nature: The *Nature* skill measures your knowledge of terrain, plants, and weather. It no longer applies to animals—that domain is now a part of *Animal Handling*.

GM: The wolf snarls, teeth bared. You can tell it's about to pounce—what do you do, Chansi?
Chansi: I'm a ranger—I've dealt with lone wolves before. I'll scare this one away with a wild scream.
GM: You want to terrify the wolf? Make a Charisma (Animal Handling) check.

Background Features

You don't gain features (such as *Discovery* or *Ship's Passage*) automatically from your background. However, you can emulate these effects by making appropriate checks during your roleplaying scenes.

Variant: Outlander

If you want to keep background features in your game, apply the following to the *Outlander: Wanderer* feature.

Outlander: Wanderer

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

Darkvision

True darkvision is a rare ability, found only in those who live in the darkest places of the world. To make darkness more significant in your game, apply these changes.

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

Darkvision Powers

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

Low-light Vision

Race | Trait

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

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 can't see in darkness.

Sunlight Sensitivity

If your character has the *Sunlight Sensitivity* racial trait, you may remove it by taking one of the following actions:

a. Remove your native *Darkvision* racial trait.
b. Replace your native *Superior Darkvision* racial trait with the *Low-light Vision* trait described above.

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 can't be "inspired" by the same characteristic multiple times in one game session, so keep it varied.

Languages

You can speak, read, and write a maximum number of unique 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 comprehend and discard the rest.

Common: All characters know how to speak in the *Common* language. However, you can't read or write in Common unless you have used one of your known language options to master it.

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.
+4	You can speak, read, and write five languages.
+5	You can speak, read, and write six languages.

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 *Halfing*. With INT -1, she can speak Halfling and Common, but can't read or write with either language.

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.

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.

In the dark gloom of the ruined library, Clanda heard a growl. She pulled a rotting book from the shelf, cast *Light*, and threw the glowing book into the shadows...

7

Racial Changes

Race is a core part of your character's identity, helping to define your strengths and weaknesses. The following 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: When you roll a natural 1 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

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

Lizardfolk

Hungry Jaws: Replace *Hungry Jaws* with the following:

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 creature. If the attack hits, it deals 1d6 + STR damage. If the creature is neither undead nor a construct, 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.

Class Changes

Only the most brave—or most foolhardy—of adventurers would head out into the wilds without adequate training, skills, and abilities.

This chapter introduces a number of class changes to resolve balance issues. These changes are recommended but not mandatory—use the ones that best suit your game.

Barbarian

Fierce and rage-driven warriors, barbarians can solve almost any problem 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 his frenzy slip away, taking a measure of his stamina with it. Around the dwarf lay five dead orcs—warriors of the Redtoof warband. Krazak cursed loudly.

"Weak," he snarled. "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 rage burned in his blood again. "Now this is more like it!" he roared.

Giffyglyph's Class Compendium

To see a major overhaul of the core D&D classes, fully rebalanced for 1st-10th-level, try *Giffyglyph's Class Compendium*—a 5e supplement with new rules, features, and subclasses for your D&D 5e characters.

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 can't 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) may 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, watching it from atop the trees as she tried 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. These changes help to resolve some issues that *I've* experienced, but if your game doesn't face similar problems—or these changes don't suit your particular playstyle—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 the dragonborn to the ground. "Stay down," growled the orc. "Final warning."

Monk

Masters of inner peace and martial arts, monks harness their ki to connect with the universe itself.

Way of the Four Elements

You have 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 disciplines of your choice at 6th, 11th, and 17th-level.

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 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 Hundred Agonies	Flaming Sphere	2
Gong of the Summit	Shatter	2
Hand of the 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 Scorcher	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 stone hand burst from the ground. "And they are displeased..."

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.

Ulryn walked forward, her ki blazing as earth and stone wrapped around her skin with each step.

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.

> Truth is a 5th-level drow paladin of devotion with a +4 Charisma modifier. As he prepares to undertake an oath quest—a journey through the haunted *Sundered Fields*—Truth can choose up to 4 smite powers. He chooses divine, thunderous, wrathful, and branding.

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, banishing, etc)—this is unchanged.

> Truth slashed his sword through the air and felt his blade catch against the invisible stalker.
>
> "Now I've got you!" grinned the paladin victoriously. Divine power poured into his sword, branding the stalker with a glowing, radiant 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

You specialize in hunting a particular quarry. In addition to tracking, knowledge, and language advantages, your favored enemy grants you a new spell—this is a special ability you have learned 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—reflavor the spell's appearance to better suit your 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, huh?"

She grinned, holding out a hand. "Me too!" Fierce flames burst from her palm and immolated 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.

An animal friend is for life, not just for Midwinter.

◇ 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 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 chosen 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

As a beastmaster, 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 (p123) 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

You are your own spellcasting focus for sorcerer spells—you don't need an arcane focus 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.

If you have an origin spell that doesn't normally appear on the sorcerer spell list, that spell is nonetheless a sorcerer spell for you.

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 can't create *new* spell slots, but you can recover *expended* spell slots by spending sorcery points.

You may recover multiple spell slots 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 sudden chill sweep through her body and almost fell to one knee—the last of her spellpower was now gone. She felt empty without it.

The hobgoblin sneered in victory, pointing its hooked sword at her. "Out of spells already? Might always beats magic in the end, you weak little witch."

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

The hobgoblin ran in terror. He didn't 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 more options at 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:

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:** Warlock features that rely on your Charisma modifier (Agonizing Blast, Lifedrinker, etc) now use your Intelligence modifier where appropriate.

Edgar opened the thick, black tome with trembling hands, cursing his frailty. The sickness had taken a turn for the worse—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 blood-soaked eldritch runes. 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 voices in his head. They never stopped whispering. Were they his own thoughts come to life, or his patron's? Edgar couldn't tell the difference anymore.

One voice broke through the cacophony with ease.

"Make your choice," it demanded.

"Strength," grinned 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 | Class (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.

This power comes at a cost, however. 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 in pain as Edgar spoke aloud the dissonant whispers of his patron. A maelstrom of aberrant terror was unleashed in her mind—visions of a nightmare world far beyond mortal understanding.
>
> Edgar kept humming his patron's song long after the elf had 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 can't 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 prized, leather spellbook and began to revise her sigils...

9

Rookie Characters

If you want to run a low-powered adventure—or explore a time *before* your characters became notable heroes—try using 0th-level 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: 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	4 + 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. As a hermit, she has only 5 gp to spend on 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.

GM: You strike the mage fiercely, but he still stands.
Ulryn: Can I stun him as part of that attack?
GM: 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 the GM a destiny point).
GM: The mage staggers back, momentarily *stunned*, as your fist slams into his jaw (takes the destiny point).

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

Leveling Up

Once 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:

A. **Saving throw:** Replace one class saving throw (of your choosing) with your rookie saving throw.
B. **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.
C. **Cantrip:** Keep one rookie cantrip (of your choosing) in addition to any others your class may grant.
D. **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 create level-appropriate monsters for your rookies—or any other adventure—try *Giffyglyph's Monster Maker*, a monster-focused D&D supplement with guides and templates to help you build new monsters in seconds.

Howling Skeleton

Level -1 Striker
Medium humanoid, Undead — Minion (3 XP)

Armor Class	7	**Damage**	1
Attack Bonus	+1	**Speed**	30 ft
Hit Points	3 (2)	**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

Level 0 Controller
Medium humanoid — Standard (25 XP)

Armor Class	12	**Damage**	1
Attack Bonus	+2	**Speed**	30 ft
Hit Points	16 (8)	**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—if they're lucky—overcoming it.

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

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 Pigmin 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—freed from their prison cells—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 can't scream.

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

10 The Pigmin of Palicor

You find yourself strapped to an operating table as the mad Butcher of Palicor prepares to turn you into one of her monstrous Pigmin. 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 Pigmin have your scent, and they are hungry. Can you find a way to escape the horrifying Butcher and her warped creations?

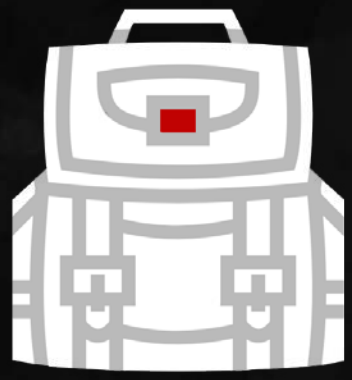
PART 3

Your Inventory

10 Active Inventory p53
Manage your inventory with bulk and item slots.

11 Wear & Tear p61
Track item damage and decay with notches.

12 Ammunition Dice p65
Track your arrows with ammunition die.



10

Active Inventory

The right gear at the right time can make all the difference between life and death. But how do you keep track of what you're carrying?

This chapter introduces *inventory slots*, *object bulk*, and new systems to help you manage your inventory.

Slots & Bulk

An active inventory manages items using inventory slots (storage capacity) and object bulk (carrying effort).

Inventory Slots

Inventory slots describe *storage* capacity—how much can a thing carry without being overwhelmed? One slot holds one small object—a potion bottle, a dagger, a loaf of bread, etc.

Anything that can hold, carry, or contain objects can make use of inventory slots—for example:

- **Creatures** use slots to describe how much they can carry before they're encumbered.
- **Containers** use slots to describe how much they can store before they're full.
- **Buildings** use slots to describe how much free space they have in their rooms.
- **Vehicles** use slots to describe how much they can transport before they can't move.

Bulk

Objects use *bulk* to describe how many inventory slots they fill—the bulkier the object, the more slots occupied.

Bulk represents the *effort* needed by a medium-sized creature to carry an object based on its size, weight, and shape—the more awkward or uncomfortable it is to hold an object, the higher its bulk.

Your Inventory

Your inventory capacity depends on your *creature size* and *strength modifier*—the bigger and stronger you are, the more inventory slots you have.

As your size increases, so too does your bulk—a larger creature takes more effort to carry. Your bulk equals the larger of either a) your *minimum bulk* or b) the total bulk of everything in your inventory.

Creature Inventory

Creature Size	Inventory Slots	Minimum Bulk
Tiny	6 + STR	5
Small	14 + STR	10
Medium	18 + STR	20
Large	22 + ⌊ STR x 2 ⌋	40
Huge	30 + ⌊ STR x 4 ⌋	80
Gargantuan	46 + ⌊ STR x 8 ⌋	160

Here we see three characters calculate their inventory:

- Valiant, a human cleric, is a medium-sized creature (18 slots) with +2 STR (+2 slots). He has a total of 20 inventory slots, and occupies a minimum of 20 slots when carried.
- Crackle, a kobold wizard, is a small creature (14 slots) with –1 STR (–1 slot). She has 13 inventory slots and occupies a minimum of 10 slots.
- Brakken, a goliath barbarian, is a medium-sized creature with *Powerful Build* (22 slots) and +3 STR (+6 slots). She has 28 inventory slots and occupies a minimum of 20 slots when carried.

Basic Supplies

In addition to inventory slots, you can freely carry a limited number of basic supplies—one ration box, one waterskin, and one purse.

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

These three basic supply containers don't occupy any inventory slots, but they can still be affected by NPCs and monsters in some fashion—stolen, damaged, destroyed, etc—so keep an eye on them.

Additional Supplies: You can carry additional supplies (more rations, waterskins, purses, etc) by adding them into your inventory space as normal.

Carrying Objects

When you hold or carry an object, you add it to your inventory. Fill a number of *inventory slots* according to the object's *bulk*—the bulkier the object, the more inventory slots you must fill.

Valiant buys some hempen rope (2 bulk) and a torch (1 bulk) and puts them in his backpack, filling 3 slots.

Later, when Crackle is knocked unconscious by a rock trap, Valiant carries her to safety. As a small creature (10 bulk), she occupies 10 inventory slots.

Estimating Bulk

To choose a bulk rating for an object, consider its general size, weight, and shape—the more uncomfortable an item is to hold, the higher the bulk rating. Check the *Bulk* table below for some example guidelines.

Extremely Small Objects: Some items are *especially* small and easy to pack together—pins, coins, paperclips, etc. It takes 100 of these items to fill one inventory slot.

Extremely Large Objects: If you need to assign a bulk rating to an extremely large object, use a multiple of 18 for your bulk rating—18/36/54/72, etc.

Bulk Ratings

Bulk ratings assume the perspective of a medium-sized creature by default. Use larger bulk ratings to reflect larger-than-normal items (giant-forged swords, ogre armor, etc), and smaller ratings for smaller-than-normal equipment (gnome rock-hammers, pixie armor, etc).

GM: 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.
GM: 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...

Encumbrance

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

Encumbered

Condition

- Your speed is halved
- You have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution.

Maximum Capacity

You can't exceed your inventory capacity by more than half your maximum inventory slots (rounded down).

Valiant has an inventory capacity of 20 slots. He is encumbered from 21 slots, and can't carry more than 30 bulk in total.

Bulk

Category	Bulk	Size	Weight
Tiny	0.2	**Tiny:** Smaller than the palm of your hand. You can hold many of these in one hand.	**Negligible:** A negligible or trivial weight.
Small	1	**Short:** Up to a handspan / 9 inches. Can be held comfortably with one hand.	**Light:** Up to 2 lbs. The weight of a loaf of bread or a bag of sugar.
Medium	2	**Medium:** Up to an arms-length / 2 feet long. Can be held with one hand.	**Medium:** Up to 5 lbs. About as heavy as a few big bags of sugar.
Large	3	**Long:** Longer than an arm. Usually can be held with one hand, but us most comfortable with two.	**Heavy:** Up to 10 lbs. About as heavy as a cat or a sack of potatoes.
X-Large	6	**Extra-long:** Longer than the height of an average person. Requires two hands to hold.	**Extra-heavy:** Up to 35 lbs. About a quarter of the weight of an average person.
XX-Large	9	**Extensive:** Longer than the height of two people. Requires two hands to hold.	**Leaden:** Up to 70 lbs. About half as heavy as an average person.

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 inventory 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
Carried (18/20)	• Chain Mail (75 gp, 9 bulk) • War Pick (5 gp, 2 bulk) • Shield (10 gp, 2 bulk) • Healer's Kit (5 gp, 1 bulk) • Prayer Book (25 gp, 1 bulk) • Torch (1 cp, 1 bulk) • Bedroll (1 gp, 2 bulk)
Ration Box	• Basic Ration (5)
Waterskin	• Clean Water (5)
Purse	• 28 gp, 9 sp, 9 cp (46 coins)

Wearing heavy armor cuts Valiant's free 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 inventory 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 inventory 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
Carried (14/21)	• Handaxe (5 gp, 2 bulk) • Shield (10 gp, 2 bulk) • Greataxe (30 gp, 3 bulk) • Gaming Set, Dice (1 sp, 1 bulk) • Whetstone (1 cp, 1 bulk) • Chain (5 gp, 1 bulk) • Torch (1 cp, 1 bulk) • Cook's Utensils (1 gp, 2 bulk)
Ration Box	• Basic Ration (5)
Waterskin	• Dwarven Ale (5)
Purse	• 9 gp, 9 sp, 8 cp (26 coins)

Of his 21 inventory slots, Krazak fills 13—plenty of room left 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.

Dragging Objects

When you drag or pull an object, that object can still affect your inventory. Halve the bulk value of any object that you are dragging or pulling (rounding down).

Heaped Objects: If you're pulling a *pile* of objects, halve the *total* amount of bulk—not the individual items.

Rolling Transport: If you're pulling an object that is designed to travel easily (a cart, a wagon, a sled), you may quarter that object's bulk value.

Krazak finds a rotting chest that holds 1,900 assorted copper coins (19 bulk carried, 9 bulk when dragged). He drags the chest back up to the surface and loads it onto a hand cart (20 bulk carried, 5 bulk when pulled).

Wearables

Wearable items—clothes, gloves, boots, hats, necklaces, etc—can be categorized into two groups: *attire* and *armor*.

- **Attire:** Clothing and finery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, etc) don't occupy any inventory slots while worn—unless that attire is *awkward* for you.
- **Armor:** Armor—and other *awkward* wearables—continue to occupy inventory slots while worn.

Valiant can carry 20 slots-worth of equipment. Before heading out into adventure, he dons a set of common clothes (attire, 1 bulk) and some chainmail (armor, 9 bulk)—he has 11 slots left for other equipment.

Crackle, meanwhile, is trying to infiltrate a draconic cult. She has fashioned a dragon costume (attire, 2 bulk) that is awkward to move around in—it continues to fill 2 inventory slots even when worn.

Armor Expertise

Armor is big and bulky, but there's a trade-off—you become more resistant to harm.

If you're wearing medium or heavy armor (and you're appropriately proficient) you gain one of the following perks. These doesn't stack with any additional armor feats or bonuses you might gain—use the highest value.

Armor Expertise

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.

Transporting Goods

On your travels, you may need to transport goods in large quantities—carting gold from a dragon's lair, shipping ore across the sea, moving grain from one village to another. For this, you'll need transport vehicles and containers.

Vehicles

Vehicles—carts, carriages, ships, trains, etc—store items in the same way as characters: with *inventory slots*.

Vehicle capacity is measured in six scales of *spacing*—this describes the number of inventory slots available to carry creatures and cargo.

Vehicle Capacity

Spacing	Examples	Slots
Cramped	Cart (Hand), Sled (Hand)	20
Snug	Cart (Horse), Chariot, Rowboat	60
Compact	Wagon, Carriage (Horse), Keelboat	180
Spacious	Carriage (Train)	540
Capacious	Longship, Sailing Ship	1,620
Vast	Galley, Warship	4,860

Valiant, Crackle, and Krazak need to cross the Brindle River. Together, they occupy a total of 50 bulk—they hire a snug rowboat, safe in the knowledge that it can carry all three of them and (probably) won't sink.

Transport Animals

Creatures can also carry items for you—pack mules, horses, elephants, etc. The carrying capacity of these creatures depends on their size category and strength modifier—the same as any character.

Storage Containers

You may need to transport goods within storage containers—chests, crates, barrels, etc—for security or convenience. A storage container has a number of inventory slots equal to its bulk rating:

- A *small* chest (1 bulk) has 1 inventory slot.
- A *large* crate (3 bulk) has 3 inventory slots.
- An *extra-large* barrel (6 bulk) has 6 inventory slots.

Nested Containers

You can store containers within containers—but a nested container must be at least one size category smaller than its parent.

Crackle has three containers—two small (1 bulk) chests and one large (3 bulk) crate.

She can't fit a 1 bulk chest inside another 1 bulk chest, but she can put both chests inside the crate.

Fiction First

Use the vehicle capacities listed here as a guide, but be mindful of the fiction—a galley may have 4,860 inventory slots, but that doesn't necessarily mean it can support the weight of 30 gargantuan dragons at once.

If you think a vehicle is being put *under duress* by cargo or passengers, apply an appropriate penalty to its inventory capacity—or put the vehicle at harm's risk.

Magical Containers

On your adventures, you may find magical containers that can change their storage capacity far beyond the normal. For example:

- **Bag of Holding:** This magical bag (1 bulk) can hold many more items than its size would suggest. A *Bag of Holding* has 6 inventory slots.
- **Portable Hole:** This magical object (1 bulk) can be folded out into a container with 9 inventory slots.
- **Handy Haversack:** This magical haversack (2 bulk) has 12 inventory slots.

These containers can be very valuable to adventurers with limited access to transport vehicles or animals.

In the ruins of the Arcane Sanctum, Valiant finds a Bag of Holding—still intact after all these years. He places the bag (1 bulk) inside his leather backpack, increasing his total inventory space by 5 slots.

Inventory Interactions

Once you have an object stowed away in your inventory, you must draw it out before you can use it. During your turn, you may use 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.

Armor

Name	Armor Class (AC)	Cost	Bulk	Name	Armor Class (AC)	Cost	Bulk
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	Bulk	Name	Damage	Cost	Bulk
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	—	—	—	—

Transportation

Type	Transportation	Size	Speed	Cost	Slots	Bulk
Animal	Camel	Large	50 ft	50 gp	28	40
	Donkey or Mule	Medium	40 ft	8 gp	26	20
	Elephant	Huge	40 ft	200 gp	54	80
	Horse, Draft	Large	50 ft	50 gp	30	40
	Horse, Riding	Large	60 ft	75 gp	25	40
	Mastiff	Medium	40 ft	25 gp	19	20
	Pony	Medium	40 ft	30 gp	20	20
	Warhorse	Large	60 ft	400 gp	26	40
Vehicle (Land)	Carriage, Horse	Huge	—	100 gp	180	180
	Cart (Hand)	Medium	—	5 gp	20	20
	Cart (Horse)	Large	—	15 gp	60	60
	Chariot	Large	—	250 gp	60	60
	Sled (Hand)	Medium	—	5 gp	20	20
	Sled (Horse)	Huge	—	20 gp	180	180
	Wagon	Huge	—	35 gp	180	180
Vehicle (Water)	Galley	Gargantuan	4 mph	30,000 gp	4,860	4,860
	Keelboat	Gargantuan	3 mph	3,000 gp	180	180
	Longship	Gargantuan	5 mph	10,000 gp	1,620	1,620
	Rowboat	Large	3 mph	50 gp	60	60
	Sailing Ship	Gargantuan	5 mph	10,000 gp	1,620	1,620
	Warship	Gargantuan	4 mph	25,000 gp	4,860	4,860

Adventuring Gear

Name	Cost	Bulk	Name	Cost	Bulk	Name	Cost	Bulk
Abacus	2 gp	*S*, 1	Grappling Hook	2 gp	*S*, 1	Pole (10 ft)	5 cp	*L*, 3
Acid (vial)	25 gp	*T*, 0.2	Hammer	1 gp	*S*, 1	Pot, Iron	2 gp	*S*, 1
Alchemist's Fire (flask)	50 gp	*S*, 1	Hammer, Sledge	2 gp	*L*, 3	Potion of Healing	50 gp	*S*, 1
Ammo, Arrows (20)	1 gp	*S*, 1	Holy Symbol, Amulet	5 gp	*S*, 1	Ram, Portable	4 gp	*XL*, 6
Ammo, Bolts (20)	1 gp	*S*, 1	Holy Symbol, Emblem	5 gp	*S*, 1	Ration (1)	1 sp	*T*, 0.2
Ammo, Bullets (20)	4 cp	*S*, 1	Holy Symbol, Reliquary	5 gp	*S*, 1	Ration Box	5 sp	*S*, 1
Ammo, Needles (50)	1 gp	*S*, 1	Holy Water (flask)	25 gp	*S*, 1	Rope, Hempen (50 ft)	1 gp	*M*, 2
Antitoxin (vial)	50 gp	*T*, 0.2	Hourglass	25 gp	*S*, 1	Rope, Silk (50 ft)	10 gp	*S*, 1
Arcane Focus, Crystal	10 gp	*S*, 1	Hunting Trap	5 gp	*S*, 1	Scale, Merchant's	5 gp	*S*, 1
Arcane Focus, Orb	20 gp	*S*, 1	Ink	10 gp	*T*, 0.2	Sealing Wax	5 sp	*T*, 0.2
Arcane Focus, Rod	10 gp	*S*, 1	Ink Pen	2 cp	*T*, 0.2	Shovel	2 gp	*L*, 3
Arcane Focus, Staff	5 gp	*L*, 3	Instrument, Bagpipes	30 gp	*L*, 3	Signal Whistle	5 cp	*T*, 0.2
Arcane Focus, Wand	10 gp	*S*, 1	Instrument, Drum	6 gp	*M*, 2	Signet Ring	5 gp	*T*, 0.2
Ball Bearings (1,000)	1 gp	*S*, 1	Instrument, Dulcimer	25 gp	*L*, 3	Soap	2 cp	*T*, 0.2
Barrel	2 gp	*XXL*, 9	Instrument, Flute	2 gp	*S*, 1	Spellbook	50 gp	*S*, 1
Bedroll	1 gp	*M*, 2	Instrument, Horn	3 gp	*M*, 2	Spikes, Iron (10)	1 gp	*S*, 1
Bell	1 gp	*S*, 1	Instrument, Lute	35 gp	*M*, 2	Spyglass	1,000 gp	*S*, 1
Blanket	5 sp	*S*, 1	Instrument, Lyre	30 gp	*M*, 2	Tent, Two-person	2 gp	*L*, 3
Block & Tackle	1 gp	*S*, 1	Instrument, Pan Flute	12 gp	*S*, 1	Tinderbox	5 sp	*S*, 1
Book	25 gp	*S*, 1	Instrument, Shawm	2 gp	*M*, 2	Tools, Alchemist	50 gp	*M*, 2
Bottle, Glass	2 gp	*S*, 1	Instrument, Viol	30 gp	*M*, 2	Tools, Brewer	20 gp	*M*, 2
Bucket	5 cp	*M*, 2	Jug or Pitcher	2 cp	*S*, 1	Tools, Calligrapher	10 gp	*S*, 1
Caltrops (20)	1 gp	*S*, 1	Kit, Climbers	25 gp	*S*, 1	Tools, Carpenter	8 gp	*S*, 1
Candle	1 cp	*T*, 0.2	Kit, Disguise	25 gp	*S*, 1	Tools, Cartographer	15 gp	*S*, 1
Case	1 gp	*S*, 1	Kit, Forgery	15 gp	*S*, 1	Tools, Cobbler	5 gp	*S*, 1
Chain (10 ft)	5 gp	*S*, 1	Kit, Healer's	5 gp	*S*, 1	Tools, Cook	1 gp	*M*, 2
Chalk (1 piece)	1 cp	*T*, 0.2	Kit, Herbalism	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	—	—	—
Game, 3 Dragon Ante	1 gp	*S*, 1	Poison, Basic (vial)	100 gp	*T*, 0.2	—	—	—

Equipment Packs

Pack	Cost	Total Bulk	Pack	Cost	Total Bulk
Burglar's Pack	16 gp	17	Explorer's Pack	10 gp	20
Diplomat's Pack	39 gp	9	Priest's Pack	19 gp	11
Dungeoneer's Pack	12 gp	22	Scholar's Pack	40 gp	5
Entertainer's Pack	40 gp	11	**Note:** Assume 1 days-worth of rations = 2 individual rations		

Variant Dials

If you want to customize the *Active Inventory* for your game, consider the following variant dials.

A Containers

Use *containers* to introduce a *granular* system of inventory management that focuses on item placement.

Characters divide their inventory slots into distinct containers—bags, belts, sheathes, etc—that they name, categorize, and place about their person.

Valiant has 11 free inventory slots (with 9 slots already occupied by his chain mail). He divides these into:

- a 4-slot weapon sheath (for his war pick and shield)
- a 3-slot belt (for his healer's kit and torch)
- a 4-slot bag (for his prayer book and bedroll).

Container Categories

Containers can be broadly separated into 5 categories. When you create your inventory containers, assign a category to each—you can mix and match categories however you like, or even rename them to something more fitting (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.
- **Worn:** Space reserved for significant wearables, such as armor and awkward attire.

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 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, Valiant 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 we see two characters divide their inventory slots into containers.

Chansi, Halfling Ranger

Chansi, a halfing ranger with −1 STR, can have only 13 inventory 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.

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.

Chansi's Inventory

Type	Contents
Quiver (3/3)	• Shortbow (25 gp, 2 slot) • Arrows (1 gp, 1 slot)
Sheath (3/3)	• Shortsword (10 gp, 2 bulk) • Dagger (2 gp, 1 bulk)
Bag (4/4)	• Hunting Trap (5 gp, 2 bulk) • Rope (1 gp, 2 bulk)
Worn (3)	• Studded Leather (45 gp, 3 bulk)
Ration Box	• Basic Ration (5)
Waterskin	• Clean Water (5)
Purse	• 31 gp (31 coins)

Vikan, Goliath Sorcerer

Vikan, a goliath sorcerer with +2 STR, can have up to 26 inventory 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.

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, but Vikan paints for the love of the craft and not the reward.

Vikan's Inventory

Type	Contents
Sheath (3/3)	• Quarterstaff (2 sp, 3 bulk)
Quiver (3/3)	• Light Crossbow (25 gp, 2 bulk) • Bolts (1 gp, 1 slot)
Belt (4/6)	• Focus, Orb (20 gp, 1 bulk) • Gaming Set, Cards (5 sp, 1 bulk) • Lamp (5 sp, 1 bulk) • Oil (1 sp, 1 bulk)
Bag (5/14)	• Painter's Supplies (10 gp, 2 bulk) • Blanket (5 sp, 1 bulk) • Bedroll (1 gp, 2 bulk) • Rope, Hempen (1 gp, 2 bulk)
Ration Box	• Basic Ration (5)
Waterskin	• Clean Water (5)
Purse	• 8 sp (8 coins)

Vehicles and Buildings

You can also use containers to divide up other forms of inventory—such as vehicle and building storage. Use these to control where items are placed. For example:

The *Amber Jewel*, sailing ship of Port Rondel, has a total of 1,620 inventory slots. These are divided into:

- Crew and Passengers: 810 slots
- Cargo (secure): 405 slots
- Cargo (unsecured): 405 slots

The spacious *Landril Warehouse* on the Port's eastern docks can hold up to 540 inventory slots. These are divided into four regions:

- General Cargo: 220 slots
- Frozen Goods: 135 slots
- Secured Cargo: 135 slots
- Vaulted Goods: 50 slots

B Quickdraw

If you want to make inventory access a little more restricting for your players, use *Quickdraw* items.

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, non-quickdraw items 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. This isn't a quickdraw item, and so it takes Krazak a full action to dig out the torch from his bag.

Changing Items

A character may rearrange their inventory and change their quickdraw items during a short or long rest.

Viridian has a shortsword, dagger, and rope as his 3 quickdraw items. Because 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.

C Pack Endurance

if you want to make a slight increase to the amount of inventory space, use *Pack Endurance*.

A creature may use either a) their Strength modifier or b) their Constitution modifier to calculate their inventory slots—whichever is highest.

Chansi is a halfling ranger with -1 STR and +2 CON. With *Pack Endurance* and her Constitution modifier, Chansi has 16 inventory slots.

D Object Scaling

The bulk ratings listed in the equipment tables assume the perspective of a medium-sized character for simplicity.

But if you want to scale object sizes up or down, apply the following bulk category modifiers when appropriate.

Creature Sizing: A creature can't use an object that's inappropriate for their size (either too small or too large).

Scaling Modifiers

Scale	Description	Bulk Category
Tiny	Much smaller than normal.	–2
Small	Smaller than normal.	–1
Large	Larger than normal.	+1
Huge	Much larger than normal.	+2
Gargantuan	Much, much larger than normal.	+3

Krazak encounters an ogre with a greatclub. Normally, a greatclub is a 3 bulk weapon—but this one is *larger* than normal and so is 6 bulk (+1 bulk category).

Armor Sizes

To scale armor with creature size ratings, use these alternate bulk ratings instead.

Armor Sizes

Size	Armor Bulk			
	Light	Medium	Heavy	Shield
Tiny	1	2	3	1
Small	2	5	7	1
Medium	3	6	9	2
Large	4	7	11	3
Huge	5	10	15	4
Gargantuan	8	15	23	5

Chansi wants to buy some light armor. Because she is a halfling, her *small-sized* light armor is only 2 bulk.

Viridian also buys some light armor. As a tiefling, his *medium-sized* light armor is 3 bulk.

Mismatched Armor Sizes

A creature can't use or wear armor that's not of their size category—it simply doesn't fit.

Armor Alterations: A skilled armorer may (with appropriate tools) permanently change the size of a piece of armor by one step (smaller or larger) from its natural size—for a negotiable fee (25% of the armor's base cost).

11

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 with *notches*, how damage degrades 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, consequences, 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

If you are critically hit by an attack, your armor gains a notch of damage. Each notch reduces your total AC by 1.

Unarmored: If you're 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.

> The gnoll's heavy maul hit Truth with a fierce crunch, denting the drow's fine plate armor. It grinned at the weak point now exposed in Truth's defences...

◇ Weapons

Weapons—both melee and ranged—gain a notch when you critically fail an attack (or other relevant action) with them.

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

Multiple Dice: Some weapons roll multiple die for their damage (greatswords, for example, rolling 2d6). In these cases, one notch reduces the size of the *largest* die by one size category (see *Type B*).

Sustained Damage: A weapon's damage can't go below 1, but it can still gain additional notches. These notches must be repaired with relevant tools (whetstones, smith's tools, etc) to restore the weapon's damage dice.

Weapon Damage Degradation
Type A: 1d12 → 1d10 → 1d8 → 1d6 → 1d4 → 1
Type B: 2d6 → 1d6 + 1d4 → 2d4 → 1d4 + 1 → 2 → 1

◇ Spellcasting Focus

A spellcasting focus (a bard's instrument, a wizard's staff, a cleric's holy symbol, etc) gains a notch whenever you critically fail a spellcasting action whilst holding it.

Each notch reduces your total spellcasting ability by 1 for any action which involves that focus.

Magical Mishaps: If you roll a critical fail while spellcasting and are *not* holding a spellcasting focus at the time, the power strikes out and hits a random item in your inventory—that item gains a notch of damage.

◇ 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).

Each notch reduces the item's efficacy 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.

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

Shattered Gear

If your items suffer too much damage, they can break irreparably into useless scrap.

Objects are grouped into three categories of toughness based on their overall construction: delicate, sturdy, and indestructible. Most objects are *sturdy* enough to withstand a fair amount of punishment (up to 10 notches), but *delicate* items can shatter after just two notches.

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+

GM: That's a critical failure on your spell attack, Clanda. Take a notch of damage.
Clanda: Damn, I'm not holding my focus. That means my... (rolls for a random item) *delicate* potion of healing takes a second notch. Oh dear.
GM: Oh dear indeed. Your arcane power hits the already-chipped glass potion bottle—it shatters inside your bag, spilling the liquid everywhere.

Sacrificing Weapons and Armor

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

Likewise, when you are hit by an attack you can choose to sacrifice your armor and reduce the damage taken by 3d4 for light armor, 3d8 for medium armor, and 3d12 for heavy armor. You can decide this after damage is dealt.

Irreparably Destroyed: When you sacrifice a weapon or armor in this way, it is irreparably destroyed—you can't repair it nor restore the item with simple magic (such as the *Mending* cantrip).

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 can also perform basic repairs on their gear with relevant tools—a whetstone to smooth out a notch, a sewing kit to patch up a robe, a hammer to tap out a dent, etc. To repair one notch, you must spend one hour using a set of tools and make an Intelligence (Tool) ability check. If you succeed, you repair one notch of damage. If you critically fail, however, you create a new notch.

Repair DC: The GM will decide the DC of your repair based on the relative ability of your tools and the overall state (or rarity) of your item: very easy (5), easy (10), medium (15), hard (20), very hard (25), or impossible (30).

Mending

The *Mending* cantrip repairs broken items—a broken key, a punctured waterskin, a split bow, a torn page, etc. Notches, however, represent only minor or superficial damage to an item—not a complete break—and can't 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: Ok, that's my bag *finally* dried out. I'll scoop together the remains of the bottle and cast *Mending*.
GM: 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.

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 ⅛ (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.

Tempered Protection

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.

GM: 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 wide arc... (rolls 1) ...and miss. Great.
GM: 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 × 2	3 days	Base value × 3
Royal	Base value × 4	1 week	Base value × 6
Astral	Base value × 8	2 weeks	Base value × 12

Craftsmen

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

Rare Materials

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

Repairing Tempered Gear

When you temper an item, its inherent value increases (as shown in the *Tempered Value* column of the Tempering Costs table). This also means that it becomes more expensive to repair notches on your tempered item—so 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 × 2) and takes 3 days. After the temper is applied, the weapon is worth 90 gp (30 × 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—for example, a merchant will offer much less for damaged goods and a noble may be offended to receive anything that appears second-hand. There may be times, however, when you want your gear to have a few good 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 requires 1 week per grade—though rare or delicate items may take longer.

Magic items are significantly more difficult to restore than mundane items. You may need to find an elite artisan or some rare materials to restore the appearance of your magical gear.

Item Restoration

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

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.

A 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.

GM: The orc swings a sword 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 an Intelligence (Tool) ability check—if you succeed, you 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. Mending has no effect on damaged objects.

Variant: Thicker Armor

If you want to add more durability to your armored characters, add more conditions to heavier armor types:

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

B Temperless Notches

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

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.

C 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	**Damage**	10
Attack Bonus	+6	**Speed**	30 ft
Hit Points	45 (23)	**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.

12

Ammunition Dice

Some items require ammunition—arrows, bolts, bullets, charges, etc. But in the heat of battle, it's not always clear how much ammo you have left in your quiver.

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

If you're down to one piece of ammunition and you use it, that's it—it's all gone! Remove it from your inventory.

Ammunition Die

d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4 → 1

GM: The ghoul grabs hold of you tight, Viridian, moaning as it prepares to bite. What do you do?
Viridian: Uh Chansi, need a little help here!
Chansi: Yea see the thing is, I'm kinda running low on arrows. Ammunition die is down to a d4—
Viridian: TAKE THE DAMN SHOT, CHANSI!
Chansi: *Fine*. That's... (rolls 15) ...15 to hit, and... (rolls 1) ...damn, a 1 for ammunition. Last arrow.

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 individual shot as you use them.

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

Most ammunition types will start with (and have a maximum size of) a d12 *ammunition die*—this represents a full stack of arrows/bolts/bullets/etc. Some special items, however, may have their own unique limitations—such as a wand with d8 maximum charges.

Multiple Stacks: If you're carrying multiple stacks of any one type of ammunition, prioritize the smallest stack. Always roll the smallest ammunition die per ammo type.

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

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%

PART 4

Crafting

13 Active Crafting p67
Gather crafting materials for your recipes.

14 Gemstones p71
Add tiers of quality to your gemstones.

15 Arcane Jewels p72
Upgrade your gear with magical jewels.

16 Oils p80
Turn gemstones into magical oils.

17 Potions p84
Brew magical potions for your adventures.

18 Flasks p88
Store multiple potions in small, handy flasks.

13

Active Crafting

To craft an item, you need three things: the right knowledge, the right tools and the right materials. But how do you know which materials to use for which recipe? And how do you gather them?

This chapter introduces *materials*, *recipes*, and *nodes*, and rules on how to use them in your campaign.

Materials

A *crafting material* is a generic resource that can be used in all forms of crafting—from brewing potions and forging weapons to building settlements. Materials are defined by three simple properties:

1. **Rarity:** How common is this material in the world? The rarer the material, the more difficult it is to find, gather, and collect.
2. **Substance:** What is this material made of?
3. **Element:** What magical properties—if any—can this material enhance? Most materials have an elemental affinity, even if they themselves are not magical.

One "measure" of a material counts as a small item unless specified otherwise. Use the *Material Properties* table to create your own generic materials for your in-game crafting recipes.

A GM introduces a new craftable item to their game—the *Sword of Elemental Rage*. This magic item requires the following materials:

- 2 × Redsteel bar (common, metal, fire).
- 1 × Hellhound skin (uncommon, skin, fire).
- 1 × Flame elemental core (rare, stone, fire).

Swapping Materials

When you craft an item from a recipe, you can oftentimes use a different set of materials to those listed—so long as the properties match. If you want to use materials with *differing* properties, the following applies:

- **Rarity:** Materials you substitute must have an equal *or higher* rarity—you can't use materials of lesser rarity.
- **Substance:** You can change the substance of a material *if* it makes sense for the item and can be justified.
- **Element:** You can change the element of a material *if* it makes sense for the item and can be justified. If an item is strongly tied to an elemental theme, you may need to substitute the element of multiple materials.

Krazak has a salamander skin (rare, skin fire)—he can use this in place of hellhound skin.

Zane likes to use bone for his weapons—he replaces the redsteel bars with young red dragon bones (uncommon, bone, fire), crafting a bone sword instead of a steel sword.

Clanda wants to use a *lighting* elemental core (rare, stone, lightning) to craft a *sword of elemental shock*—however, she would also need to change the other materials to suit this new element.

Material Names

Material names can be entirely unique to your campaign and adventure—all you have to worry about *mechanically* are the material properties. Use names for *flavor* and let players contribute their own material ideas whenever possible—especially while harvesting materials from slain monsters.

Material Properties

d100	Type	Description
A RARITY		
01-16	Common	You can find this almost anywhere in the world.
17-32	Uncommon	You can find this almost anywhere, but it's hard to gather or get access to.
33-48	Rare	This material is limited (by location, quantity, or time).
49-64	Very rare	This material is limited (by location, quantity, or time) *and* is hard to gather or get access to.
65-80	Legendary	A mythic material found in the most dangerous places of the world.
81-96	Unique	There is only one instance of this material in the world.
B SUBSTANCE		
01-07	Bone	Bone taken from a once-living creature.
08-14	Ceramic	A ceramic material—such as clay—commonly used to make earthenware, porcelain, and brick.
15-21	Fabric	A fabric material—such as wool, cotton, tweed, silk, etc.
22-28	Flesh	A chunk of flesh or organs taken from a once-living creature.
29-35	Fluid	A liquid—such as blood, water, oil, etc.
36-42	Gas	A gaseous substance.
43-49	Glass	A transparent or translucent substance, usually made from sand.
50-56	Metal	A metallic mineral or ore—iron, gold, steel, etc.
57-63	Otherworldly	An indescribable, otherworldly substance.
64-70	Plant	Material harvested from a plant—such as fibers, flowers, pollen, etc.
71-77	Skin	Skin taken from a once-living creature.
78-84	Stone	A hard form of rock commonly used for construction.
85-91	Wood	A hard material gathered from trees.
C ELEMENT		
01-10	Air	Wind, sound, flexible, flighty.
11-20	Earth	Earth, nature, stubborn, reliable.
21-30	Fire	Flame, heat, passion, fury.
31-40	Force	Magic, immaterial, detached, spectral.
41-50	Lightning	Lightning, electricity, impulsive, energy.
51-60	Necrotic	Darkness, decay, morbid, fatalistic.
61-70	None	No discernable element.
71-80	Psychic	Mind, supernatural, insightful, otherworldly.
81-90	Radiant	Light, purify, calming, ordered.
91-00	Water	Water, cold, tempestuous, chaotic.

Example Monstrous Materials

Name	Properties	Name	Properties
Aarakocra feather	Uncommon, skin, air	Merfolk fin	Uncommon, skin, water
Ancient red dragon blood	Legendary, fluid, fire	Mimic tongue	Uncommon, otherworldly, psychic
Air elemental whisp	Uncommon, gas, air	Modron cog	Rare, metal, radiant
Beholder eye	Very rare, flesh, psychic	Mummy bandages	Very rare, fabric, necrotic
Blighted needle	Uncommon, plant, earth	Myconid spore	Uncommon, plant, psychic
Bugbear tooth	Uncommon, bone, fire	Pegasus feather	Rare, skin, air
Bulette scales	Rare, skin, earth	Peryton horn	Rare, skin, air
Bullywug tongue	Uncommon, flesh, water	Purple worm scale	Legendary, skin, earth
Carrion Slime	Uncommon, fluid, necrotic	Remorhaz stomach	Very rare, flesh, necrotic
Chimera liver	Rare, flesh, fire	Roc heart	Very rare, flesh, air
Chuul eye	Rare, flesh, force	Sahuagin eye	Uncommon, flesh, water
Cloaker skin	Rare, skin, force	Salamander skin	Rare, skin, fire
Dracolich bone	Legendary, bone, necrotic	Treant branch	Rare, wood, earth
Gibbering tentacle	Rare, otherworldly, psychic	Troll flesh	Rare, flesh, earth
Gorgon plate	Rare, metal, necrotic	Umber hulk pincer	Rare, bone, earth
Gray ooze residue	Uncommon, fluid, necrotic	Unicorn horn	Rare, bone, radiant
Iron golem plating	Very rare, metal, force	Vampire fang	Very rare, bone, necrotic
Illithid brain	Very rare, flesh, psychic	Wyvern toxin	Very rare, fluid, necrotic

Recipes

Recipes teach you how to craft materials into rewards. You can discover crafting recipes through experimentation, or be trained by a willing mentor—often for a price. A simple crafting recipe describes four things:

1. **Reward:** What do you get once you craft this recipe?
2. **Crafting Materials:** How many materials do you need and of what type for this reward?
3. **Time:** How long will it take to craft this reward?
4. **Requirements:** Are there any additional requirements?

To create your own crafting recipes for your game, follow these four steps:

1 Choose a Reward

First, you need to choose the *reward* for crafting this recipe. A reward can be anything—a sword, a magical suit of armor, a house, a ship, a castle.

A fiendish warlock wants to craft a suit of *Demon Armor*—a very rare magic item—to appease their patron. After some consideration, the GM decides to create a new crafting recipe for their game...

2 Pick some Materials

Next, choose a reward size from the *Recipe Details* table below to see how many crafting materials your recipe will need—bigger rewards need bigger quantities of material.

As a general rule of thumb, choose three different types of crafting material for your recipe: a primary (50%), a secondary (30%), and a tertiary (20%) material. Select material rarities, substances, and elements that best fit the type—and theme—of reward.

Recipe Materials

Reward Size	Materials	Description
Tiny	1-5	Smaller than a person.
Small	10	As big as a person.
Medium	100	As big as an elephant.
Large	1,000	As big as a house.
Huge	10,000	As big as a mansion.
Gargantuan	100,000	As big as a fort.
Astronomical	1,000,000+	As big as a castle.

As a full-body suit of plate for one person, this *Demon Armor* recipe requires 10 crafting materials. The GM splits these into three types:

- 5 × Dark iron ore (uncommon, metal, fire).
- 3 × Spellbinding oil (rare, fluid, force).
- 2 x Barlgura heart (very rare, flesh, fire).

Fiction First

Crafting recipes can be a fun way to get characters out into the world in the hunt for rare materials..

Be evocative and flavourful with your recipe materials—and don't worry about simulating reality too closely. Use broad strokes to create compelling quest hooks.

3 Choose a Crafting Time

Now it's time to decide how long it takes to craft the reward. A recipe measures crafting time in *days*—how many days would it take *one* average person to craft this reward once they have gathered all the materials? Choose a crafting time from the *Recipe Details* table below.

Teamwork: Some rewards could take months, years, even centuries for one person to craft—a house, a castle, a ship, etc. For these long-term rewards, consider recruiting additional people to help with your crafting efforts.

Crafting Time

Time Scale	Days	Examples
Days	1-5	A potion, a meal, a painting.
Weeks	10	A sword, a grand feast.
Months	100	A suit of armor, a tiny house.
Years	1,000	A large house, a temple.
Decades	10,000	A mansion, a church.
Centuries	100,000	A fort, a cathedral.
Millennia	1,000,000+	A castle, a giant pyramid.

4 Apply Restrictions

Finally, consider what restrictions (if any) this recipe may have—skills, tools, alignment, additional costs, etc.

And that's it—your recipe is complete! Now you can add it to your game for your players to starting gathering their crafting materials.

The GM decides that it takes 100 days to craft some *Demon Armor*. In addition, to finish their recipe, they add the following crafting restrictions:

- **Proficiencies:** Arcana, Smith's tools.

Recipe: Demon Armor

Recipe

Reward ..... 1 × Demon Armor
Crafting Time ..... 100 days
Requirements ..... Arcana, Smith's tools

Qty	Material	Properties
5	Dark iron ore	Uncommon, metal, fire
3	Spellbinding oil	Rare, fluid, force
2	Barlgura heart	Very rare, flesh, fire

Nodes

To gather a crafting material, you must first find a source. These are *resource nodes* and they come in all shapes and sizes—trees, mines, rivers, cities, creatures, quarries, etc.

To create a new resource node for your game, follow these three steps:

1 Choose some Materials

First, choose the crafting materials that can be harvested from this resource node. A basic node will provide only one type of material, but some may hold two—or even three—different types.

To help support the crafting of *demon armor*, the GM introduces two new resource nodes to the game:

1. **Dark iron veins:** These uncommon mining veins contain dark iron ore (uncommon, metal, fire) and coal (common, stone, necrotic).
2. **Dark iron golem:** A new monster that—once defeated—can be stripped down for dark iron plating (rare, metal, fire).

2 Set a Quantity

Next, pick a *richness* for your node—the richer the node, the more materials you can harvest before it runs dry.

Limited: Some nodes may contain a fixed number of specific materials—one heart, two animating cores, 2d6 ruby scales, etc. Assign these limits as appropriate.

Regeneration: Some nodes can renew their materials over time and restore their quantity—a farm grows new crops, fish thrive in a pond, trees grow new branches, etc.

If you expect a resource node to be a long-term factor in your game, consider adding a regeneration rate and speed to reflect this.

Node Richness

Richness	Quantity	Description
Exhausted	0	This node has run dry.
Meagre	1-5	A creature or basic resource.
Simple	10	A tree, a vein, a huge creature.
Rich	100	A giant tree, a gargantuan creature.
Plentiful	1,000	A small village, a cultivated farm.
Bountiful	10,000	As big as a fort.
Limitless	100,000	A city, a huge quarry.

The GM sets the following for their new nodes:

1. A **dark iron vein** is a *simple* node with 10 materials. Only 1d4 of these materials are dark iron ore.
2. A **dark iron golem** is a *meagre* node—it can only provide 1 material.

3 Pick a Gathering Time

Choose a gathering time to see how long it takes to make one gathering attempt on this node.

Gathering Time

Time Scale	Min. Time	Time Scale	Min. Time
Seconds	1 second	Weeks	1 week
Minutes	1 minute	Months	1 month
Hours	1 hour	Years	1 year
Days	1 day	Decades	10 years

4 Set some Gathering Skills

Next, choose some gathering skills that would be appropriate for your node and a DC required (if any) to harvest material. Below are listed some example skills and how they may be used:

Common Gathering Skills

Skill	Description
Animal Handling	You harvest materials from animals.
Arcana	You interact with the arcane.
Athletics	You harvest materials with brute force.
Intimidation	You bully and extort materials from a person or place.
Nature	You harvest materials from plantlife.
Persuasion	You charm and bargain materials from a person or place.
Religion	You interact with the divine.

When you choose a skill, set a DC for the harvesting attempt: very easy (5), easy (10), medium (15), hard (20), very hard (25), or impossible (30). When a player spends the requisite amount of time gathering material, they may make a relevant ability check:

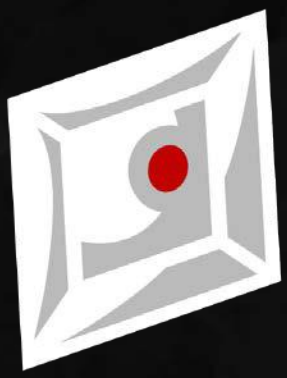
- **Critical Success:** You harvest two measures of material.
- **Success:** You harvest one measure of material.
- **Failure:** You fail to gather anything.
- **Critical Failure:** You fail to gather anything and the node loses two measures of material.

The GM decides that it takes 1 hour to make a mining attempt on a dark iron vein (Athletics, DC 15). It takes 1 day, however, to strip plating from a dark iron golem—this can be done using either Arcana or Athletics (DC 15).

5 Apply Restrictions

Finally, consider what restrictions (if any) this node may require—skills, tools, knowledge, etc.

And that's it—your node is complete! Now you can add it to your game for your players to interact with and starting harvesting materials.



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Gemstones

No treasure hoard is complete without a set of gemstones to catch an adventurer's wandering eye. These precious jewels are highly sought after—for trade, for crafting, and for magical components. But how do you determine the value of your gemstones?

This chapter introduces *gemstone qualities* and rules on how to use them in your campaign.

Gemstone Qualities

A gemstone comes in one of six qualities—cloudy, clear, pristine, royal, lucent, and astral. The higher the quality, the more valuable the gemstone is.

To appraise the quality of a gemstone, you must succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Gemstone Qualities

Quality	Description	Uncut	Cut
Cloudy	Visible imperfections.	2 gp	10 gp
Clear	Minor imperfections.	10 gp	50 gp
Pristine	No visible imperfections.	20 gp	100 gp
Royal	Rare sparkles of light.	100 gp	500 gp
Lucent	Persistent sparkles of light.	200 gp	1,000 gp
Astral	A persistent, inner glow.	1,000 gp	5,000 gp

GM: Inside the chest, Clanda, you find 100 silver pieces and a red, cut gemstone of unknown quality.
Clanda: Unknown? We'll see about that... (rolls 22).
GM: A spark catches your eye—this is a *royal* ruby.
Clanda: Ah, a royal ruby for a royal sorceress—perfect.
Valiant: ...Uh, there's *three* of us in the party, Clanda.
Clanda: Your point being...?

Jeweler's Tools

Jeweler's tools can help you to appraise, cut, and polish gemstones. If you are proficient with jeweler's tools, add your proficiency bonus to your appraisal check.

If you are also proficient in *Investigation*, you can make your appraisal check with advantage.

Crackle is proficient with both *Investigation* and jeweler's tools. When appraising gemstones, she adds her proficiency bonus once *and* rolls with advantage.

Cutting Gemstones

You can cut a gemstone to improve its value and unlock any latent, magical properties. It takes around eight hours to cut and polish a single, tiny stone.

Make a Wisdom check against a DC determined by the quality of the stone—if you fail, the gemstone shatters and turns into arcane dust worth half of its uncut value.

Cutting Gemstones

Quality	DC	Quality	DC
Cloudy	15	Royal	20
Clear	15	Lucent	25
Pristine	20	Astral	25

Crackle wants to cut a clear sapphire. After eight hours, she makes a Wisdom check (DC 15) using her jeweler's tools—and rolls 17. The sapphire is cut.

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Arcane Jewels

The weapons you wield and the armor you wear say a lot about your character. But what do you do when your favorite gear starts to lose its edge?

With the right tools and training, you don't have to leave your favorite items behind. Find arcane jewels in your adventures and socket them into your items to boost their power with new, magical abilities.

This chapter introduces *arcane jewels* and rules on how to include them in your campaign.

Jewels

Arcane jewels are precious gemstones (such as a sapphire, ruby, or emerald) that have been carefully cut, shaped, and inscribed with magic runes—often by a wizard or artificer.

When an arcane jewel is socketed into a weapon or piece of armor, that item is imbued with a permanent magical power—a new damage type, elemental resistance, improved accuracy, a new spell, etc.

Lucent Jewel of Immolation

Weapon Jewel | Ruby | Charges (3)

Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 2d6 additional fire damage.

The target is then afflicted with burning flames. At the start of each of its turns, the target must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 16)—if it fails, the target takes 2d6 fire damage. The effect ends when either a) the target makes a successful saving throw against it or b) one minute has passed.

Arcane jewels brim with magical power—transform your mundane weapons and basic armor into magical, customized artifacts.

Socketing a Jewel

To use an arcane jewel, you must socket it into a piece of equipment. There are three steps to this process:

1. **Pick an Item:** Choose either a) a weapon or b) a piece of light, medium, or heavy armor. Your item must be both a) non-magical and b) have fewer than three currently-socketed jewels.
2. **Pick a Jewel:** Choose a jewel that is appropriate for your item. You can't socket the same type of jewel into the same item more than once—so choose carefully.
3. **Use your Tools:** Spend one hour and a set of tinker's tools (or other tools appropriate for your item—smith's tools, weaver's tools, etc.) to socket your jewel. You must be proficient with your tools to do this.

Krazak has a *Lucent Jewel of Immolation* and wants to socket it into his non-magical greataxe. He spends one hour fitting the jewel with his *smith's tools*.

When you socket an arcane jewel into an item, the jewel provides no magical benefit until you attune to the item.

Krazak's greataxe remains non-magical until he attunes to it—at which point the socketed jewel flares into life and the weapon becomes magical.

Later, Krazak finds a second jewel—a *Royal Jewel of Elements (Fire)*. He wants to socket it, but can't while the weapon is magical. He ends his attunement to the greataxe—this restores the weapon to its non-magical state and allows him to socket the new jewel.

Removing a Socketed Jewel

Once a jewel is socketed, it becomes an innate part of the item. To remove a socketed jewel, you must spend eight hours working with an appropriate set of tools. Once you unsocket a jewel, the jewel can be reused.

Alternatively, you can spend only one hour to shatter a socketed jewel directly. This removes the jewel from the item, but renders it worthless—the jewel can't be reused.

Krazak has recovered an *Astral Jewel of Elements (Fire)* from a red dragon's hoard. To socket it into his greataxe, he must first remove the currently-socketed *Royal Jewel of Elements (Fire)*.

During his downtime in the city of *Karadune*, Krazak spends eight hours with his smith's tools carefully prizing the royal jewel from his greataxe.

Masterwork Items

A magic +1/+2/+3 weapon or piece of armor with no other enhancements or special features is considered a *masterwork* item.

You can socket jewels into masterwork items as normal, treating them as if they were non-magical items.

Chansi has a *masterwork* +1 bow. The bow has no other magical features, and she is able to socket a *Lucent Jewel of Freezing* into the weapon.

Viridian, meanwhile, has some *Glamoured Studded Leather* armor. This +1 armor has an additional magic feature—glamouring—and so can't be socketed.

Casting a Jeweled Spell

Some jewels—such as *Jewels of Spellbinding*—can store a spell and allow you to cast it at a later date. When you cast a jeweled spell, the following features apply:

- **Command Word:** You must speak a command word to activate the jeweled spell.
- **Spell Slots:** You don't expend any spell slots when casting a spell from a jewel.
- **Class Restrictions:** You may cast the spell even if you are not a natural spellcaster.
- **Components:** You may ignore any uncosted spell components (verbal, somantic, and material).
- **Saving Throws:** If your spell requires a target to make a saving throw, the DC depends on the quality of your jewel—royal (DC 13), lucent (DC 15) and astral (DC 18).

Viridian, a tiefling bard, has a *Lucent Jewel of Spellbinding (Burning Hands)* socketed into his armor.

On his turn, he speaks a command word to activate the jewel and then spends 1 bonus action to cast a 1st-level *Burning Hands* spell.

Jewel Charges

Charged jewels can be used only a few times before they run out of magical power and become dormant.

To spend a charge, you must speak a command word. The jewel must be socketed into an attuned item, and you must be wearing or holding the item to command it.

Choosing your Command Words: When you socket a jewel into an item, you may decide what its command word is. This overrides any previous command word assigned to the jewel.

Recovering Charges: A socketed jewel in an attuned item recovers all expended charges when it's owner finishes a long rest.

Jewelcrafting

Across your adventures, you may discover gemstones of a particularly high quality—royal, lucent, and astral stones.

If you're proficient with both a) Arcana *and* b) jeweler's tools, you can create your own arcane jewels from these cut gemstones. There are three steps to follow:

1 Pick a Jewel Recipe

First, you acquire the relevant crafting recipe for your jewel. Each jewel needs a specific type of gemstone as described by its recipe.

2 Get a Gemstone

Next, you must acquire a suitable gemstone. An arcane jewel requires a particular type and quality of gemstones—pick the right stone for your intended jewel.

Your gemstone must be a) cut and b) either royal, lucent, or astral in quality (as specified by your jewel).

3 Craft the Jewel

It takes 8 hours of careful work with jeweler's tools to turn a cut gemstone into a jewel, at which point you can make an Intelligence (Arcana) check against the quality of your gemstone: royal (DC 15), lucent (DC 20), or astral (DC 25).

- **Critical Success (+10 or more):** You crafted an arcane jewel *and* salvaged a small amount of gemstone dust. This dust can be used as a *crafting material* with the following properties:
  - **Rarity**: Rare (Royal), Very rare (Lucent), or Legendary (Astral)
  - **Substance:** Stone
  - **Element:** Choose one that suits your gemstone
- **Success:** You crafted an arcane jewel. It holds magical energy and is now ready to be socketed.
- **Failure:** You cracked the gemstone—it can't be turned into a jewel, potion, or oil.
- **Critical Failure (−10 or more):** You've made a huge mistake—the gemstone cracks and its quality is reduced by one step.

Crafting Details

Some jewels require you to choose a specific detail—such as a spell, skill, or saving throw. Once you finish crafting your jewel, this detail can't be changed—a *Royal Jewel of Skill (Acrobatics)* will forever be that—so choose your spells and skills wisely.

Imprinting a Spell: To imprint a spell into a jewel (such as a *Jewel of Spellbinding*), you must a) be able to cast the spell yourself and b) have the spell prepared. You can't imprint any spell that requires concentration or costed material components (unless specified otherwise).

Viridian wants to craft a *Royal Jewel of Spellbinding (Healing Word)* for his armor—in case of emergencies.

To hold a 1st-level spell, Viridian buys a cut, royal malachite. He spends a day crafting the jewel and makes a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check—he rolls a 17, successfully creating a *Royal Jewel of Healing Word*.

Jewel Recipes

There are 32 common arcane jewels that can be crafted for your weapons and armor. Use these recipes to create your jewels and empower your equipment.

Elemental Gemstones

Some jewels derive their damage type (fire, cold, etc.) from their gemstone. There are 10 known elemental gemstones:

Gemstone	Type	Gemstone	Type
Alexandrite	Thunder	Onyx	Necrotic
Amethyst	Psychic	Peridot	Acid
Aquamarine	Force	Ruby	Fire
Diamond	Radiant	Sapphire	Cold
Emerald	Poison	Topaz	Lightning

Jewel Recipes

d100	Jewel	Gemstone	Tiers	Charges	Effect
A ARMOR JEWELS					
01-08	Absorption	Garnet	RLA	—	Reduce the amount of nonmagical damage you take by 1/2/3.
09-16	Capacity	Opal	LA	—	Increase the carrying capacity of your armor.
17-24	Grounding	Opal	LA	—	Reduce the distance you are forcibly moved by 5/10 ft.
25-32	Luck	Pearl	RLA	1/2/3	Reroll an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw.
33-40	Resilience	Garnet	RLA	—	Gain a +1/+2/+3 AC bonus.
41-48	Resistance	Elemental	L	—	Gain resistance to one type of elemental damage.
49-56	Safety	Jasper	RLA	—	Gain a +1/2/3 bonus to a saving throw.
57-64	Skill	Pearl	RLA	—	Gain a +1/2/3 bonus to a skill.
65-72	Speed	Jet	RLA	3	Gain a +5/10/15 ft bonus to your speed for 10 minutes.
73-80	Spellbinding	Quartz	RLA	1	Cast a 1st/2nd/3rd-level spell.
81-88	Spellpower	Quartz	RLA	1	Recover an expended 1st/2nd/3rd-level spell slot.
89-96	Vigor	Jet	RLA	1	Recover 1/2/3 expended hit dice.
B WEAPON JEWELS					
01-05	Accuracy	Pearl	RLA	—	Gain a +1/2/3 attack bonus.
06-10	Bane	Emerald	RLA	3	Deal poison damage and poison your target.
11-15	Blinding	Diamond	RLA	3	Deal radiant damage and blind your target.
16-20	Corrosion	Peridot	RLA	3	Deal acid damage and lower your target's AC.
21-25	Damage	Garnet	RLA	—	Gain a +1/2/3 damage bonus.
26-30	Decay	Onyx	RLA	3	Deal necrotic damage and disintegrate your target.
31-35	Elements	Elemental	RLA	—	Deal +1d6/1d8/1d10 elemental damage.
36-40	Frost	Sapphire	RLA	3	Deal cold damage and freeze your target in place.
41-45	Immolation	Ruby	RLA	3	Deal fire damage and create ongoing flames.
46-50	Opportunity	Jet	L	3	Make an opportunity attack as a free action.
51-55	Nightmares	Amethyst	RLA	3	Deal psychic damage and make your target afraid of you.
56-60	Piercing	Elemental	A	—	Ignore one type of elemental resistance.
61-65	Reach	Pearl	LA	3	Extend your reach by +5/10 ft until the end of your next turn.
66-70	Recovery	Quartz	L	1	Restore the charges of another socketed jewel.
71-75	Shock	Topaz	RLA	3	Deal lightning damage and stop your target making reactions.
76-80	Spellbreaking	Aquamarine	RLA	3	Deal force damage and stop your target casting spells.
81-85	Summoning	Jasper	A	3	Summon your weapon into your hand.
86-90	Thunderstrike	Alexandrite	RLA	3	Deal thunder damage and push your target back.
91-95	Transmutation	Elemental	A	—	Change the natural damage type of your weapon.
96-00	Wrath	Elemental	RLA	—	Deal +4/8/12 elemental damage when you critically hit a target.

A Armor Jewels

These jewels can be socketed into a non-magical (or masterwork) piece of light, medium, or heavy armor.

Jewel of Absorption

Armor Jewel | Garnet

Royal	Reduce any bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage that you take from non-magical weapons by 1, to a minimum of 1.
Lucent	The damage absorption bonus increases to 2.
Astral	The damage absorption bonus increases to 3.

Jewel of Capacity

Armor Jewel | Opal

Lucent	You count as one size category larger when determining your carrying capacity.
Astral	In addition to your carrying capacity, you count as one size category larger when determining the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

Jewel of Grounding

Armor Jewel | Opal

Lucent	When you are forcibly moved against your will, you can spend your reaction to reduce the distance you are moved by up to 5 ft. You must remain in contact with the ground during this movement.
Astral	The maximum reduction increases to 10 ft.

GM: The drunk ogre kicks out at you, Ulryn, knocking you back 5 ft—right over the edge of the bridge.
Ulryn: Tsk tsk—you can't move the mountain, my friend. I flare my *Lucent Jewel of Grounding* and stay exactly where I am...

Jewel of Luck

Armor Jewel | Pearl | Charges (1)

Royal	When you make an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you can spend 1 charge to reroll 1 d20. You must accept the second result.
Lucent	The number of charges increases to 2.
Astral	The number of charges increases to 3.

Jewel of Resilience

Armor Jewel | Garnet

Royal	This armor has a +1 bonus to AC. This does not stack with other armor bonuses.
Lucent	The AC bonus increases to +2.
Astral	The AC bonus increases to +3.

Jewel of Resistance

Armor Jewel | Elemental

Lucent	You have resistance to the damage type of your elemental gemstone.

Jewel of Safety

Armor Jewel | Jasper

Royal	You have a +1 bonus to one saving throw, chosen when the jewel is first crafted.
Lucent	The saving throw bonus increases to +2.
Astral	The saving throw bonus increases to +3.

Jewel of Skill

Armor Jewel | Pearl

Royal	You have a +1 bonus to one skill, chosen when the jewel is first crafted.
Lucent	The skill bonus increases to +2.
Astral	The skill bonus increases to +3.

Jewel of Speed

Armor Jewel | Jet | Charges (3)

Royal	As a bonus action, you can spend 1 charge to gain a +5 ft bonus to your maximum speed. This effect lasts for 10 minutes.
Lucent	Your movement bonus increases to +10 ft.
Astral	Your movement bonus increases to +15 ft.

Jewel of Spellbinding

Armor Jewel | Quartz | Charges (1)

Royal	This jewel holds an imprint of 1st-level spell. During your turn, you can spend 1 charge to cast the spell imprinted into this jewel.
Lucent	This jewel can hold a 2nd-level spell.
Astral	This jewel can hold a 3rd-level spell.

Jewel of Spellpower

Armor Jewel | Quartz | Charges (1)

Royal	As a bonus action, you can spend 1 charge to recover one expended 1st-level spell slot.
Lucent	The maximum slot level increases to 2nd-level.
Astral	The maximum slot level increases to 3rd-level.

Jewel of Vigor

Armor Jewel | Jet | Charges (1)

Royal	As a bonus action, you can spend 1 charge to recover one expended hit die.
Lucent	You regain two expended hit die.
Astral	You regain three expended hit die.

B Weapon Jewels

These jewels can be socketed into a non-magical (or masterwork) weapon.

Jewel of Accuracy

Weapon Jewel | Pearl

Royal	This weapon has a +1 bonus to attack. This does not stack with other attack bonuses.
Lucent	The attack bonus increases to +2.
Astral	The attack bonus increases to +3.

Jewel of Bane

Weapon Jewel | Emerald | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional poison damage. The target must then make a Constitution saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target is *Poisoned* until the end of its next turn.
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Blinding

Weapon Jewel | Diamond | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional radiant damage. The target must then make a Constitution saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target is blinded until the end of its next turn.
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Corrosion

Weapon Jewel | Peridot | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional acid damage. The target must then make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target's AC is reduced by 1 for the next 10 minutes. This effect is not cumulative.
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Damage

Weapon Jewel | Garnet

Royal	This weapon has a +1 bonus to damage rolls. This does not stack with other damage bonuses.
Lucent	The damage bonus increases to +2.
Astral	The damage bonus increases to +3.

Jewel of Decay

Weapon Jewel | Onyx | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional necrotic damage. If the target is reduced to 0 hit points by this attack, it is disintegrated.
Lucent	The damage increases to 1d8.
Astral	The damage increases to 1d10.

The troll laughed at the wound torn open on its chest. "Stupid dwarf, you can't kill me—you have no fire."

Krazak grinned, pointing at the black jewel socketed into his greataxe. The troll's laughter turned to howls of pain as its body disintegrated from within.

Jewel of Elements

Weapon Jewel | Elemental

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can deal 1d6 additional elemental damage.
Lucent	The damage increases to 1d8.
Astral	The damage increases to 1d10.

Jewel of Frost

Weapon Jewel | Sapphire | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional cold damage. The target must then make a Strength saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target's speed is reduced to 0 until the end of its next turn. The target can spend an action and make a Strength saving throw (DC 13) to attempt to break free of the frost during its turn.
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Immolation

Weapon Jewel | Ruby | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional fire damage. The target is then afflicted with burning flames. At the start of each of its turns, the target must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target takes 1d6 fire damage. The effect ends when either a) the target makes a successful saving throw against it or b) one minute has passed.
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Opportunity

Weapon Jewel | Jet | Charges (3)

Lucent	You can spend 1 charge to make one opportunity attack using this weapon as a free action. If you hit a target with this attack, its speed is reduced to 0 until the start of its next turn.

Jewel of Nightmares

Weapon Jewel | Amethyst | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional psychic damage. The target must then make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target can't attack you or target you with harmful abilities or magical effects until the end of its next turn. If the target makes a successful save, it is immune to future instances of this effect for one hour
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Piercing

Weapon Jewel | Elemental

Astral	When you hit a creature with this weapon, you can ignore resistance to the damage type specified by the jewel's gemstone. If your target has immunity, treat it instead as resistance.

Jewel of Reach

Weapon Jewel | Pearl | Charges (3)

Lucent	On your turn, you can spend 1 charge to extend the natural range of your weapon by +5 ft. This effect lasts until the end of your turn.
Astral	The range bonus increases to +10 ft.

Jewel of Recovery

Weapon Jewel | Quartz | Charges (1)

Lucent	You can spend 1 charge to fully restore the charges of one jewel socketed into this weapon.

Jewel of Shock

Weapon Jewel | Topaz | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional lightning damage. The target must then make a Constitution saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target can't take reactions until the end of its next turn.
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Spellbreaking

Weapon Jewel | Aquamarine | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 additional force damage. The target must then make an Intelligence saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target loses concentration on any currently-active spell. In addition, the target can't cast spells until the end of its next turn. If the target makes a successful save, it is immune to future instances of this effect for one hour
Lucent	Damage increases to 1d8, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to 1d10, DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Summoning

Weapon Jewel | Jasper | Charges (3)

Astral	You can spend 1 charge to summon this weapon into your free hand as a bonus action. The weapon must be within 100 ft of you to be summoned.

Jewel of Thunderstrike

Weapon Jewel | Alexandrite | Charges (3)

Royal	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d6 thunder damage. The target must then make a Strength saving throw (DC 13)—if it fails, the target is deafened until the end of its next turn. In addition, the target is pushed back 10 ft.
Lucent	The DC increases to 15.
Astral	The DC increases to 18.

Jewel of Transmutation

Weapon Jewel | Elemental

Astral	Change the natural damage type of your weapon to that of your jewel.

As Chansi socketed the topaz jewel into her bow, electric lines of power spread throughout the wood and down the bowstring. She nocked an arrow—it crackled with bolts of lightning. Chansi grinned...

Jewel of Wrath

Weapon Jewel | Elemental

Royal	When you critically hit a target with this weapon, you deal an additional 4 elemental damage.
Lucent	The damage increases to 8.
Astral	The damage increases to 12.

Mythic Jewels

Mythic jewels are a rarity in the world, hidden in treasure hoards and coveted by powerful adventurers. These jewels can't be crafted by normal means, but—if found—can be socketed into your weapons and armor.

GM: Inside the artificer's safe, you find a single jewel hidden amongst the scattered papers. You recognize it, Silva—it's a *Jewel of Quickload*.
Silva: Oh my stars, finally! I know *exactly* which thunder cannon we're going to socket you into....

Mythic Jewels

d100	Name	Charges	Effect
A ARMOR JEWELS			
01-05	Armor Master	—	You have proficiency with this armor.
06-10	Atlantian	—	You have a swim speed equal to your normal speed, and you can breathe underwater.
11-15	Charisma	—	Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
16-20	Close Call	1	When you are reduced to 0 hit points, you can spend 1 charge to be reduced to 1 hit point instead.
21-25	Constitution	—	Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
26-30	Dexterity	—	Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
31-35	Intelligence	—	Increase your Intelligence score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
36-40	Invisibility	1	As a bonus action, spend 1 charge to become invisible until the end of your next turn.
41-45	Proficiency	—	You have proficiency in one skill (as determined by the jewel).
46-50	Silence Step	—	This armor no longer imposes disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.
51-55	Spiderclimb	—	Climbing doesn't cost you extra movement.
56-60	Stealthy	—	You can try to hide while lightly obscured from the creature from which you are hiding.
61-65	Strength	—	Increase your Strength score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
66-70	Summon Armor	3	As a bonus action, you can spend 1 charge and summon your armor. The armor must be within 100 ft of you, and you must be able to wear it comfortably.
71-75	Tongues	—	You can read, write, and speak one language (as determined by the jewel).
76-80	Waterwalker	—	You can walk across water. If you end your movement on water, you fall into it as normal.
81-85	Wisdom	—	Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
B WEAPON JEWELS			
01-06	Conquest	—	This weapon critically hits a target on a natural 19-20.
07-12	Corruption	—	When you hit a target with this weapon, that target can't regenerate hit points or be healed by a magical spell or effect until the end of its next turn.
13-18	Demonslayer	—	When you hit a demon with this weapon, you deal an additional 2d6 weapon damage.
19-24	Devilslayer	—	When you hit a devil with this weapon, you deal an additional 2d6 weapon damage.
25-30	Dragonslayer	—	When you hit a dragon with this weapon, you deal an additional 3d6 weapon damage.
31-36	Fear	3	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d10 additional psychic damage. The target must then make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 18)—if it fails, the target is *Frightened* until the end of its next turn.
37-42	Feint	3	When a creature that you can see hits you with an attack roll, you can spend 1 charge to force that creature to reroll the attack. It must use the second result.
43-48	Giantslayer	—	When you hit a giant with this weapon, you deal an additional 2d6 weapon damage.
49-54	Paralysis	3	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d10 additional lightning damage. The target must then make a Constitution saving throw (DC 18)—if it fails, the target is *Paralyzed* until the end of its next turn.
55-60	Quickload	—	This weapon no longer has the Loading property.
61-66	Relocate	3	Once per turn, when you hit a target with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to deal 1d10 additional force damage. The target must make a Charisma saving throw (DC 18)—if it fails, you swap places with it. The target must be able to fit comfortably into your space, and must be within 100 ft of you.
67-72	Spectral Shot	—	This weapon can now fire spectral ammunition (arrows/bolts/bullets/etc) instead of normal ammunition. Spectral ammunition counts as magical damage. This jewel has no effect if socketed into a weapon that uses no ammunition.
73-78	Undeadslayer	—	When you hit an undead creature with this weapon, you deal an additional 1d6 damage.
79-84	Victory Rush	—	When you score a critical hit with this weapon, you can make one attack using this weapon as a bonus action.
85-90	Weapon Master	—	You have proficiency with this weapon.

Variant Dials

If you want to customize *Arcane Jewels* to better fit your game, consider some of the following variant dials.

A Artificer's Craft

If you want to make artificers more significant in crafting socketed gear, consider using *Artificer's Craft*.

Tool Expertise: While socketing or crafting a jewel, your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses your proficiency with a tool.

Critical Failure: If you critically fail while socketing or crafting a jewel, you may treat it as a normal failure.

Silva, a human artificer, is crafting a *Lucent Jewel of Accuracy*. She makes a critical error—but her artificer's knowledge enables her to salvage the gemstone.

B Permanent Jewels

If you want to make arcane jewels a more *considered* choice for your players, try using *Permanent Jewels*.

Once a jewel is socketed into a weapon or piece of armor, it is permanently fixed—you can't unsocket or shatter a socketed jewel.

C Gemstone Rarity

If you want to make magical gemstones harder to find in your campaign, try using *Gemstone Rarity*.

Gemstones—especially those of royal, lucent, and astral quality—are rare and hard (if not impossible) to buy.

Gemstone Qualities

Quality	Rarity	Quality	Rarity
Cloudy	Common	Royal	Uncommon
Clear	Common	Lucent	Rare
Pristine	Common	Astral	Very rare

D Runes & Enchantments

Jewels may not be the best fit for your campaign. If so, consider reflavoring them into *Runes* or *Enchantments*.

Runes: Magic runes are carved into small stones and set with precious gemstone dust. Turn your royal, lucent, and astral gemstones into powerful arcane runes and socket them into your weapons and armor.

Arcane runes can be socketed and unsocketed in the same fashion as arcane jewels.

Enchantments: Magic enchantments are cast using gemstone dust as a component. Turn your royal, lucent, and astral gemstones into powerful arcane enchantments and weave them over your weapons and armor.

To successfully enchant an item, you must make an Intelligence (Arcana) check against the quality of the gemstone: royal (DC 10), lucent (DC 15), or astral (DC 20).

To cast an *Astral Enchantment of Elements (Fire)* on Krazak's greataxe, Clanda grinds an astral gemstone into dust and—to perform the enchantment—makes an Intelligence (Arcana) check against DC 20...

E Risky Unsocketing

If you want to make unsocketing a little more dangerous for your players, try using *Risky Unsocketing*.

To unsocket a jewel from an item, make an Intelligence (Arcana) check (using a set of appropriate crafting tools) against the quality of the gemstone: royal (DC 10), lucent (DC 15), or astral (DC 20). If you succeed, the jewel is removed and can be reused—if you fail, the jewel shatters in your hands.

F Rare Recipes

Depending on your campaign setting, you may wish to restrict the knowledge of jewelcrafting to a few particular races, factions, or cultures.

Jewel recipes can be an easy way to add some flavor to your world or generate friction between factions.

A GM wants to add arcane jewels to their game world. They rule that only the dwarves and gnomes of the Western Dominance have the knowledge to craft jewels—knowledge that is well guarded.

Some people would pay handsomely for one of the dwarvish books of jewelcrafting, should any light-fingered adventurer be willing...

Mentors

A jewelcraft mentor—such as a jeweler or artificer—can teach you how to craft new jewels. A mentor knows the crafting recipes for three random gemstones. It takes (10 - INT) days to learn a recipe from a mentor.

Recipe Books

A jewelcrafting book can teach you how to craft new jewels. You can buy these from artificers and jewelcrafters, or find them scattered throughout the world.

A recipe book holds the crafting recipes for three jewels, and can cost upwards of 1,500 gp. It takes (10 - INT) days to learn a new recipe from the book.

Viridian is trying to learn how to craft some armor jewels. To expand his collection of jewel recipes, he buys a jewelcrafting book from a local artificer...

Recipe Book (Jewels)

Item (Small) | Rare

This book contains jewel-crafting recipes for absorption, resistance, and spellbinding jewels.

16

Oils

Before you charge into battle, take a moment to research your enemy. Discover their strengths and weaknesses, and exploit their vulnerabilities as best you can. With the right equipment and the right preparation, even the mightiest of 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 imbue weapons and armor with a temporary magical effect—resistances, additional damage, etc.

You can apply a magical oil to a weapon or piece of light, medium or heavy armor in one of two ways:

A. **Coat** Spend one minute carefully applying the oil, which lasts for up to one hour.
B. **Splash** Spend a bonus action to apply the oil, which lasts for up to one minute. When you splash on an oil, reduce the number of charges it has by 1.

You must have at least one free hand to do this, and you can't apply an oil to anything held by an unwilling target. An item can only benefit from one oil at a time—when you apply an oil, it replaces any currently active oil on the item.

In the Spiteful Halls, Krazak fights the *Lord of Cinder*—a fire elemental vulnerable to cold damage.

Krazak spends a bonus action to splash one whole vial of *Royal Oil of Frost* over his greataxe, adding +1d4 cold damage to his attacks for the next minute. Because the oil was splashed on, it has only 2 charges instead of the usual 3.

Creating Oils

If you are proficient with both a) arcana and b) an alchemist's kit, you can turn gemstones into magical oils. There are three steps to follow:

1 Pick an Oil

First, you must decide which oil you want to craft—the oil's recipe will tell you which gemstone is needed.

2 Get a Gemstone

Next, you must acquire a suitable gemstone and grind it into dust. Your gemstone must be a) cut and b) either royal, lucent, or astral in quality (as specified by your oil).

3 Craft the Oil

It takes 8 hours of work with an alchemist's kit to turn gemstone dust into oil. Once you have spent this time, roll to see if your efforts were successful. Make an Intelligence (Arcana) check against the quality of your gemstone dust: royal (DC 15), lucent (DC 20), or astral (DC 25).

- **Critical Success** Your oil was perfectly formed—you were able to create three vials of oil.
- **Success** You were able to create two vials of oil.
- **Failure** The mixture's gone bad and can't be used.

During a long rest, Clanda wants to create some *Oil of Destruction*. She buys a royal onyx and, after 1 hour, rolls a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana)—with a result of 18, she creates two vials of *Royal Oil of Destruction*.

Oil Recipes

d100	Jewel	Gemstone	Armor	Weapon
01-10	Blessing	Diamond	**Divine Protection** Reduce necrotic damage you take, and spend a charge to gain a bonus to your saving throws.	**Judgement Flare** Deal additional radiant damage, and spend a charge to blind your enemy.
11-20	Blight	Emerald	**Poison Tongue** Reduce acid damage you take, and spend a charge to spit poison onto an adjacent creature.	**Plaguebearer** Deal additional poison damage, and spend a charge to poison your enemy.
21-30	Destruction	Onyx	**Dark Harvest** Reduce radiant damage you take, and spend a charge to inflict wounds onto an adjacent creature.	**Obliterate** Deal additional necrotic damage, and spend a charge to disintegrate your enemy.
31-40	Energy	Topaz	**Unlimited Power** Reduce thunder damage you take, and spend a charge to shoot a bolt of lighting.	**Static Shock** Deal additional lightning damage, and spend a charge to stop your enemy from taking reactions.
41-50	Flameheart	Ruby	**Volcanic Fury** Reduce cold damage you take, and spend a charge to burn all adjacent creatures.	**Ashen Soul** Deal additional fire damage, and spend a charge to burn your enemy with ongoing flames.
51-60	Frenzy	Amethyst	**Twisted Voice** Reduce force damage you take, and spend a charge to hurt a creature with psychic whispers.	**Mind Warp** Deal additional psychic damage, and spend a charge to punish your enemy for attacking other targets.
61-70	Ice	Sapphire	**Winds of Winter** Reduce fire damage you take, and spend a charge to hurt your enemies with a cone of frozen wind.	**Frostshock** Deal additional cold damage, and spend a charge to freeze your enemy in place.
71-80	Spellshock	Aquamarine	**Force Repel** Reduce psychic damage you take, and spend a charge to gain a magical bonus to your AC.	**Spellbreaker** Deal additional force damage, and spend a charge to punish your enemy for casting spells.
81-90	Spite	Peridot	**Fabulous Bile** Reduce poison damage you take, and spend a charge to spray painful acid at your enemies.	**Corruptor** Deal additional acid damage, and spend a charge to reduce your target's AC.
91-00	Storms	Alexandrite	**Sonic Boom** Reduce lightning damage you take, and spend a charge to create a painfully-loud sonic boom.	**Thunderwave** Deal additional thunder damage, and spend a charge to push your target away.

Oil of Blessing

Magical Oil | Diamond | Charges (3)

A Armor — Divine Protection

Royal	Reduce any necrotic damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, whenever you make a saving throw, you can spend 1 charge to gain a +2 bonus to your roll (you may decide this after you make your roll).
Lucent	You gain resistance to necrotic damage, and the saving throw bonus increases to +4.
Astral	You gain immunity to necrotic damage, and the saving throw bonus increases to +6.

B Weapon — Judgement Flare

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 radiant damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to blind the target until the end of its next turn (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18.

Oil of Blight

Magical Oil | Emerald | Charges (3)

A Armor — Poison Tongue

Royal	Reduce any acid damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to spit poison on an adjacent creature. The creature takes 3d6 poison damage (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to acid damage, damage increases to 4d6, DC increases to 15.
Astral	You gain immunity to acid damage, damage increases to 5d6, DC increases to 18.

B Weapon — Plaguebearer

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 poison damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to poison the target until the end of its next turn (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18.

Oil of Destruction

Magical Oil | Onyx | Charges (3)

A Armor — Dark Harvest

Royal	Reduce any radiant damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to inflict wounds on an adjacent creature. The creature takes 3d6 necrotic damage (Dexterity save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to radiant damage, damage increases to 4d6, DC increases to 15.
Astral	You gain immunity to radiant damage, damage increases to 5d6, DC increases to 18.

B Weapon — Obliterate

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 necrotic damage. When you reduce a target to 0 hit points with this weapon, you can spend 1 charge to disintegrate it.
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4.

The deva stood atop the crystal stairway, eyes burning with rage. "Mortals, you stand accused of blasphemy against the most holy Dark Lady. How do you plead?"

"Guilty as charged," replied Truth smoothly. His armor gleamed with a freshly-coated *oil of destruction*.

"Yea," said Krazak. "The dragon queen can get f—"

"I *think* they get the point," interrupted Truth.

Oil of Energy

Magical Oil | Topaz | Charges (3)

A Armor — Unlimited Power

Royal	Reduce any thunder damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to cast lightning in a 5 ft by 15 ft line from you. Each creature takes 2d6 lightning damage (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to thunder damage, damage increases to 3d6, DC increases to 15.
Astral	You gain immunity to thunder damage, damage increases to 4d6, DC increases to 18.

B Weapon — Static Shock

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 lightning damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to stop the target taking reactions until the end of its next turn (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18.

Oil of Flameheart

Magical Oil | Ruby | Charges (3)

A Armor — Volcanic Fury

Royal	Reduce any cold damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to unleash a burst of flame all around. Each adjacent creature takes 2d6 fire damage (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to cold damage, damage increases to 3d6, DC increases to 15.
Astral	You gain immunity to cold damage, damage increases to 4d6, DC increases to 18.

B Weapon — Ashen Soul

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 fire damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to burn the target with ongoing flames. The flames last for up to one minute or until the target spends an action to put out the fire (Constitution save, DC 13). A burning target takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of its turn.
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18.

Burn your enemies away with *Volcanic Fury*...

Oil of Frenzy

Magical Oil | Amethyst | Charges (3)

A Armor — Twisted Voice

Royal	Reduce any force damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to speak dissonant whispers. Choose one creature within 20 ft that can hear you—the creature takes 3d6 psychic damage (Wisdom save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to force damage, damage increases to 4d6, DC increases to 15.
Astral	You gain immunity to force damage, damage increases to 5d6, DC increases to 18.

B Weapon — Mind Warp

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 psychic damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to give the target disadvantage on attack rolls that don't include you until the end of its next turn (Wisdom save, DC 13).
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18.

Oil of Ice

Magical Oil | Sapphire | Charges (3)

A Armor — Winds of Winter

Royal	Reduce any fire damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to create frozen winds in a 15 ft cone. Each creature within range takes 2d6 cold damage (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to fire damage, damage increases to 3d6, DC increases to 15.
Astral	You gain immunity to fire damage, damage increases to 4d6, DC increases to 18.

B Weapon — Frostshock

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 cold damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to reduce the target's speed to 0 until the end of its next turn (Strength save, DC 13).
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18.

Oil of Spellshock

Magical Oil | Aquamarine | Charges (3)

A Armor — Force Repel

Royal	Reduce any psychic damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as a reaction, you can spend 1 charge to gain a +3 bonus to AC until the start of your next turn.
Lucent	You gain resistance to psychic damage, and the AC bonus increases to +4.
Astral	You gain immunity to psychic damage, and the AC bonus increases to +5.

B Weapon — Spellbreaker

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 force damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to give the target disadvantage when casting spells until the end of its next turn (Intelligence save, DC 13).
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18.

The lich crackled with arcane power. "Accept your fate, cleric. The ritual will complete. Join me in death."

Valiant reached into his pouch and uncorked his *oil of spellshock*, splashing it onto his mace. Immediately, it started to vibrate with raw, spellbreaking force.

"You'll have to kill me first," challenged Valiant.

Oil of Spite

Magical Oil | Peridot | Charges (3)

A Armor — Fabulous Bile

Royal	Reduce any poison damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to spray acid in a 15 ft cone. Each creature within range takes 2d6 acid damage (Dexterity save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to poison damage.
Astral	You gain immunity to poison damage.

B Weapon — Corruptor

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 acid damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to reduce the target's AC by 2 until the end of its next turn (Dexterity save, DC 13). This AC reduction is not cumulative.
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, AC reduction increases to 3, and DC increases to 15.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, AC reduction increases to 4, and DC increases to 18.

Oil of Storms

Magical Oil | Alexandrite | Charges (3)

A Armor — Sonic Boom

Royal	Reduce any lightning damage you take by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down). In addition, as an action, you can spend 1 charge to unleash a sonic boom. Each adjacent creature takes 2d6 thunder damage (Constitution save, DC 13).
Lucent	You gain resistance to lightning damage, damage increases to 3d6, DC increases to 15.
Astral	You gain immunity to lightning damage, damage increases to 4d6, DC increases to 18.

B Weapon — Thunderwave

Royal	When you hit a target with this weapon, you deal +1d4 thunder damage. In addition, you can spend 1 charge to push the target back up to 10 ft from you (Strength save, DC 13).
Lucent	Damage increases to +2d4, DC increases to 15, distance increase to 15 ft.
Astral	Damage increases to +3d4, DC increases to 18, distance increase to 20 ft.

As goblins swarmed around him, Viridian sang out a command word. There was an explosive thunderclap. The goblins collapsed, blood pouring from their ears.

17

Potions

Magic permeates the world—it's in the air you breathe, the food you eat, and the liquids you drink. With carefully craft and preparation, this magic can be harnessed to create powerful consumables that help—or hinder—your adventures.

This chapter introduces seven consumable potions, their magical properties, and how you can interact with them in your game.

Magical Potions

A potion is a magically-infused liquid that bestows an effect on your character when consumed—health restoration, damage resistance, recovered spellpower, additional strength, etc.

Potions can vary greatly in appearance, texture, and taste depending on their recipe and maker. Use the *Potion Description* table below to determine the overall appearance of your potion—or use your own description.

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 a Potion

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.

Identifying a Potion

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 one unidentified potion by making an *Arcana* knowledge check with an alchemist's kit—base the DC against it'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 GM 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 isn't able to discover exactly what the potion is, but she at least learns that it's safe to drink.

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—including the seven basic potions listed below.

Consumables

Potion	Effect
Healing	Regain expended hit points.
Luck	Gain 3 inspiration points.
Recovery	Regain expended hit dice.
Respite	Gain temporary hit points.
Restoration	Regain one expended class or racial feature.
Spellpower	Spend a hit die to recover a spell slot.
Stamina	Ignore some exhaustion for one hour.

Krazak squinted at the label on the glass bottle. "Recovery, eh? Perfect—just what the cleric ordered."

A 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, you gain a number of hit points based on the size of your most common hit die. If you don't have a hit die value for any reason, roll a d4.

Multiclassing: 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.

Potion of Healing

Potion | Consumable

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

When you drink this potion, you instantly recover some hit points without needing to spend any hit dice—the better the quality, the more hit points you are able to restore.

Type	Rarity	Recovery
Lesser	Common	Regain [2 × hit die] + 2 hp
Greater	Uncommon	Regain [4 × hit die] + 4 hp
Superior	Rare	Regain [6 × hit die] + 8 hp
Supreme	Very rare	Regain [8 × hit die] + 16 hp

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

Viridian, a 3rd-level Bard / 1st-level Fighter, has 3d8 and 1d10 hit dice. When he drinks a lesser healing potion, he refers to his most common hit die size (d8) and rolls 2d8 + 2.

B 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

Potion | Consumable

This rare, 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 crowded card table and grinned cheerfully. "Deal me in, gentlemen. I'm feeling *extra* lucky today."

The thugs stared at him in dumbfounded silence, until Fander Welt—leader of the Brass Knuckles gang—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 showboating again. "Uh... would you believe that they're *naturally* gold?"

"Nope," said Fander curtly. "C'mon boys, let's put his luck to the test." Chairs scraped loudly as the thugs stood up, fists clenched in anticipation...

C 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 multiple sizes of hit die—such as from multiclassing—you may choose which expended dice you recover.

Potion of Recovery

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.

Type	Rarity	Effect
Lesser	Common	Recover 2 expended hit dice
Greater	Uncommon	Recover 4 expended hit dice
Superior	Rare	Recover 6 expended hit dice
Supreme	Very rare	Recover 8 expended hit dice

D Potion of Respite

When you know you're heading into a dangerous situation, a prepared adventurer makes sure to stock up on protection beforehand.

When you drink a respite potion, you may either a) spend one hit die or b) gain a level of exhaustion to gain a number of temporary hit points based on the size of your most common hit die.

Temporary hit points don't stack, and any unused points expire when you finish a long rest.

Potion of Respite

Potion | Consumable

This oily-grey potion sparkles with motes of iron. When you drink it, you feel like you could take on the world.

When you drink this potion, you may either a) expend one hit die or b) gain a level of exhaustion to gain a number of temporary hit points—the better the quality of the potion, the more temporary hit points you gain.

Type	Rarity	Effect
Lesser	Common	Gain [1 × hit die] + 1 thp
Greater	Uncommon	Gain [2 × hit die] + 2 thp
Superior	Rare	Gain [3 × hit die] + 4 thp
Supreme	Very rare	Gain [4 × hit die] + 8 thp

E 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 either a) expend one hit die or b) gain a level of exhaustion to recover one expended class or racial feature of your choosing. This feature must normally recharge during a short or long rest.

Potion of Restoration

Potion | Consumable

This *very rare* 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 either a) expend one hit die or b) gain a level of exhaustion to regain one expended class or racial feature of your choosing.

Reynis was exhausted. She'd burned through her primal power already, exhausting all of her wild shapes, and yet the undead horde was relentless. Her druidic strength 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 shapes restored. She grinned, teeth lengthening as she began to shapeshift...

F 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—your exhaustion will return in full strength once the potion wears off.

Exhaustion Limits: Your total level of exhaustion can't go lower than 0, nor higher than 6, as per normal.

Potion of Stamina

Potion | Consumable

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

You may ignore the effects of some exhaustion for up to one hour when you drink this potion.

Type	Rarity	Effect (1 hour)
Lesser	Common	–1 exhaustion
Greater	Uncommon	–2 exhaustion
Superior	Rare	–4 exhaustion
Supreme	Very rare	Ignore all exhaustion

Chansi suffers from two levels of exhaustion, causing disadvantage on ability checks *and* halving her speed.

As a bonus action, she drinks a lesser stamina potion. For the next hour, she ignores one level of exhaustion—her exhaustion drops from 2 to 1, removing the half-speed penalty. Once the potion wears off, her exhaustion goes back up to 2.

G 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 either a) spend one hit die or b) gain a level of exhaustion to regain an expended spell slot of your choosing.

Potion of Spellpower

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.

Type	Rarity	Max. Spell Slot
Lesser	Common	1st-level
Greater	Uncommon	2nd-level
Superior	Rare	3rd-level
Supreme	Very rare	5th-level

Brewing a Potion

If you are proficient with both a) arcana and b) an alchemist's kit, you can brew magical potions. There are three steps to follow:

1 Pick a Potion

First, you must decide which potion you want to craft. A potion has two major components: a *gemstone* and a *crafting material*—the recipe will tell you which types are needed for your brew.

Potion Recipes

Potion	Gemstone	Material
Healing	Diamond	Flesh, radiant
Luck	Amethyst	Metal, psychic
Recovery	Ruby	Plant, fire
Respite	Sapphire	Skin, water
Restoration	Aquamarine	Wood, force
Stamina	Topaz	Fluid, lightning
Spellpower	Quartz	Otherworldly, force

2 Get the Materials

Next, you must acquire your gemstone and materials.

Gemstone: Your gemstone must be both a) cut and b) of a certain quality depending on the rarity of your potion.

Crafting material: The quality of your crafting material must be equal to or greater than the quality of your potion.

Material Quality

Potion Rarity	Gemstone Quality	Material Quality
Common	Clear	Common
Uncommon	Pristine	Uncommon
Rare	Royal	Rare
Very rare	Lucent	Very rare
Legendary	Astral	Legendary

3 Craft the Potion

It takes 8 hours of work with an alchemist's kit to brew a potion. Once you have spent this time, roll to see if your efforts were successful.

Make an Intelligence (Arcana) check against the rarity of your potion: common (DC 10), uncommon (DC 15), rare (DC 20), very rare (DC 25), or legendary (DC 30).

- **Critical Success:** Your potion was perfectly formed—you were able to create three vials of potion.
- **Success:** You were able to create two vials of potion.
- **Failure:** The mixture's gone bad and can't be used.

While brewing a batch of lesser healing potion, Clanda has a critical success—she pours three separate vials.

Variant Dials

If you want to customize *Potions* to better fit your game, consider some of the following variant dials.

A Potion Toxicity

If you want players to think more carefully about drinking a potion, consider using *Potion Toxicity*.

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

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.

B Hard Limit

If you want to seriously restrict the use of potions in your game, consider using *Hard Limit*.

You may drink two potions per long rest without issue. If you drink an additional potion, it has no positive effect on you—negative effects, however, may still occur.

C Potion Seller

If you want your players to be able to buy potions in your game, consider using *Potion Seller*.

When you want to buy a potion from a potion seller, you must first roll a d100 to see if it's available to buy—the bigger your settlement (village/town/city), the more likely it is that you can find someone who will sell your potion. Use the percentages listed in the *Potion Availability* table below as a guideline.

To buy a potion, use the costings below as a guide.

Potion Availability

Potion Rarity	Settlement Size		
	Village	Town	City
Common	30%	50%	70%
Uncommon	10%	30%	50%
Rare	1%	10%	30%
Very Rare	—	1%	10%
Legendary	—	—	1%

Potion Costs

Potion Rarity	Cost	Potion Rarity	Cost
Common	50 gp	Very Rare	1,350 gp
Uncommon	150 gp	Legendary	4,050 gp
Rare	450 gp.	—	—

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Flasks

Potions are an adventurer's best friend, but it's not always sensible—or realistic—to carry several 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.

Flasks can vary in appearance based on who crafted it, what it is made from, etc. To see what your flask looks like, roll on the *Flask Appearance* table below.

Flask Appearance

d12	Material	Color	Style/Design
1	Fragile Glass	Blue	Human
2	Reinforced Glass	Red	Dwarven
3	Wood	Yellow	Elven
4	Ceramic	Silver	Orcish
5	Bone	Gold	Draconic
6	Wood	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:

If 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.

Flask Die

d20 → d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4 → 0

GM: The orc's greatsword hits you for 11 points of damage, Clanda. What do you do?
Clanda: Damn, I'm bloodied now. Can't risk another hit like that—I'll take a drink from my *flask of lesser healing* as a bonus action and get... 7 hit points back.
GM: Great, now roll your flask die.
Clanda: Flask quantity is d4, so I roll a d4 and get... (rolls 1) ...ah rats—that was the last of it. Ok, so no more healing—that means it's *Burning Hands* time...

Average Uses & Costs

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

Splitting a Flask

Magic fades quickly from any liquid leaving a 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 if not consumed or otherwise applied.

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 yourself.

A Treasure & Rewards

You may find a magical 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.

B Buy a Flask

Flasks are a rare item that—depending on your setting—may hard to find. But 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 lesser healing* with d6 quantity. One *potion of lesser healing* costs 50 gp, so the flask will cost him 150 gp (3 x 50).

Flask of Lesser Healing

Flask | Consumable

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

C Create a Flask

If you are able to craft magic items, you may craft your own flask—if you can find the right materials.

Recipe: Magic Flask

Recipe

Reward ..... 1 × Magic Flask
Crafting Time ..... 1 day
Requirements ..... 3 gp, Arcana, Artisan's tools

Qty	Material	Properties
2	Spellsealed glass	Rare, glass, force
1	Elderspiral wood	Uncommon, wood, force

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 allow players to mix potions in flasks but with some *volatility*, roll a d20 on the table below whenever potions are mixed in a flask. 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 *potion of poison*.
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	—	—

PART 5

Taking Action

19 Ability Checks p91
Tweaks and additions to ability checks.

20 Active Defense p93
Change combat with player-owned defense rolls.

21 Active Initiative p95
A dynamic, communication-driven initiative order.

22 Degrees of Success p97
Track the scale of player success and failure.

23 Active XP p99
Gain experience by recovering lost treasures.

24 Dangerous Magic p102
Add risk to your magic with magical burnout.

19

Ability Checks

It's time to take some action! You want to charge across the rickety bridge? Climb the crumbling wall to escape the dire wolf? Kick down the old, rotting door? Great—now make an ability check to see if you succeed.

This chapter sets out some changes to rolling mechanics—such as 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.

GM: Valiant, a guard blocks the door with his spear. "You ain't going in there," he says bluntly.
Valiant: Do I recognize the guard?
GM: 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?"
GM: 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 more about our faith—see if I can get this guard on my side and let me pass.
GM: You're trying to get him to like you? That'll be a DC 15 Charisma (Religion) check.

Social Interaction

There's 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 you interact 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.

GM: The farmer says "I 'eard that if yous eat a frog on a full moon, yous get to jump high like a frog".
Clanda: Ugh, this *stupid* peasant. "There is *no* way that is true," I tell him. Angrily.
GM: "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...
GM: You're trying to change the farmer's mind with logic and words? That'll be a DC 25 Intelligence (Persuasion) check.

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.

GM: 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)...
GM: 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, etc. 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 can help to curb the dominion of Dexterity by expanding the utility of the weakest ability—Intelligence—in a way that impacts everyone 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, you can add your proficiency bonus to any ability check made with it.

Tools & Skills: 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.

GM: The crowd are getting restless around you, Viridian. You can sense tempers starting to flare.
Viridian: This could get ugly... Everyone likes music, right? I'll play a song, see if I can calm everyone down before the mob does something stupid.
GM: 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.
GM: Perfect. You know a skill and a tool—add your proficiency *and* make the roll with advantage.

Secret Knowledge

Knowledge is a valuable resource—out in the wilds, it can 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 GM 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.

GM: 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?
GM: 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 lighting arrows left. I shoot one immediately at the mound (rolls 19).
GM: 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

When battle begins, apt adventurers don't wait to be hit by the enemy—they take defense into their own hands by dodging, blocking, and parrying.

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

Defense Rolls

Whenever the GM would normally make an attack roll against a player character, that player may instead make 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 AC—this your defense roll. The opposing DC is 22 plus the attacker's attack bonus.

Defense Rolls

Defense Roll: d20 + your AC

DC: 22 + attacker's attack bonus

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

Advantage: If your attacker would have advantage on their attack, apply disadvantage to your defense roll—and vice versa if your attacker would have disadvantage.

Critical Hits & Misses

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

Critical Ranges: If your attacker would normally score a critical hit on a roll of 19 *or* 20, then their 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 GM would normally be rolling attack rolls for the monster, the players instead make defense rolls to avoid the incoming attacks.

GM: The three orcs rush forward, rage in their eyes. Two of them swing wildly at you with their greataxes, Valiant, while the third stabs at Sarien with a javelin.
Valiant: I'll raise my shield to block. What's the DC?
GM: The DC is 27 (22 + orc attack bonus [+5]).
Valiant: Here goes... (rolls 30 [13 + AC 17]) ...Ok I bash the first attack aside with my shield, and... (rolls 22) ...damn, I get caught by the second.
GM: 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 a natural 1) ...oh that's bad.
GM: You stumble unceremoniously into the path of the javelin, Sarien, and it stabs you right in the shoulder. Take 12 points of damage.
Valiant: *Great* job, Sarien, *brilliant* dodging there.
Sarien: ...Ok on my next turn, I'll be throttling Valiant.

Static Damage

Anything controlled by the GM—NPCs, monsters, traps, environmental effects—may choose to deal *static damage* instead of making a roll for random damage.

Use the static, average damage value for your attack whenever appropriate. If the attack is a critical hit, double the static damage.

Divination: Portent

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

When 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 attacked, Emwyn must make a defense roll. He chooses to use his portent instead of rolling, and takes the *inverse* value of 18 (21 – 3)—Emwyn's defense result is 18 + his AC.

Saving Attacks

Whenever the GM would normally make a saving throw, the player instead rolls a *saving attack* to see if they can beat 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 Attacks
Saving Attack Roll: d20 + your spell save DC
DC: 22 + target's saving throw bonus

If your saving attack roll equals or beats the DC, you successfully land your attack.

Advantage: If your target would have advantage on their saving throw, apply disadvantage to your saving attack—and vice versa if your target would have disadvantage.

Critical Hits & Misses

By default, *saving attack* spells can't critically hit or miss.

Variant: Massive Damage

To add the potential for *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.

Both Sides: When using *Massive Damage*, apply the rule to both players and monsters for fairness—if players can crit more often, so too can the monsters.

Clanda: Ok myconid, let's see how you like this *fireball*.
GM: Ok Clanda, roll your saving attack.
Clanda: Piece of cake... (rolls a natural 20) ...oh you *poor* myconid—critically hit with a 3rd-level fireball? That'll be 16d6, please. I *love* my job.

Example of Play

At the end of the GM's turn, it's Clanda's time to shine. Where the GM would normally make saving throws to avoid her *Acid Splash*, Clanda instead makes a *saving attack* against each orc.

She rolls her spell damage only once, no matter the number of targets, unless she lands a critical hit as per the *Massive Damage* variant rule—in which case Clanda rolls extra damage for the affected target.

GM: Ok Clanda, it's your turn next. Valiant's under attack from the orcs and Sarien's stumbling about with a shoulder wound—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: Not *at* you, Valiant, just *around* you—a big difference. Now hush, I need focus. What's the DC?
GM: The DC is 23 (22 + orc's DEX saving throw [+1]).
Clanda: Ok, I hurl this orb of acid... (rolls 23 [10 + SDC 13]) ...and it barely hits the first orc. It scorches her for... (rolls 2) ...hmm, 2 points of acid. Not much.
GM: The orc snarls with irritation as a few drops of acid catch on her thick leather armor.
Clanda: The second... (rolls a natural 20) ...is a critical hit! Excellent. Acid splashes on the orc's face, dealing... (rolls 6 extra critical damage) ...8 total points of sizzling acid damage!
GM: That's lethal damage. The orc roars in pain and falls to the ground, clutching at his face as the flesh bubbles and melts away.
Valiant: Ew, gross.
Clanda: Do I hear a thank you? Manners, Valiant...

Variant: Small Defense

If you want to use smaller modifiers while playing with *Active Defense*, try this *Small Defense* variant.

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

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

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

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

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Active Initiative

Combat isn't a polite state of affairs and monsters don't wait in line to take their turn—battle is wild and unpredictable. Work with your allies to support each other, make plans, chain together powers, and exploit weak points like a well-oiled fighting machine.

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 to using *Active Initiative*:

1. **Better teamwork:** Players can work together more easily to chain 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.

1 Who Goes First?

First, you must decide who (or what) acted first and thereby triggered the scene. Most times it will be obvious who started things—someone throws the first punch, steps on the trap, or casts a spell.

If it's *not* obvious who acted first, you can determine this randomly by rolling for initiative—whoever rolls highest goes first. Once the first turn is complete, switch to dynamic turn ordering as described in step 2.

GM: You're caught in an ambush, Valiant—four goblins and their hobgoblin leader, Brakkus. She sneers at you. "Throw down your weapon, cleric, and maybe we'll only cut off *one* hand."
Valiant: I haven't forgotten your last betrayal, Brakkus—I'll *never* surrender. I raise my shield and charge.
GM: Sounds like you're triggering the fight with that charge, Valiant—you have the first turn.

2 Take Turns

Take your turn as normal. Once you've finished your turn, 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 takes damage during your turn can steal the initiative at the end of your turn (see *Interrupting*), so be careful who you attack.

Delaying

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

Monster Groups

Avoid side-vs-side combat by creating a wide variety of distinct, taggable monster groups. As a general rule of thumb, aim for at least 1 taggable monster/group for every two players at the start of a scene.

3 End the Round

Once every person has finished their turn, end the round as normal and clear up any expired or time-sensitive effects—spells, powers, cooldowns, event timers, etc.

Effect Durations

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. The spell ends when she takes her next turn.

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 can't 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 weren't nominated—this is called an *interrupt*. There are two main ways you can do this:

1. **Spend Inspiration:** You can spend an *inspiration point* to interrupt.
2. **Take Some Damage:** If you took damage during the last turn, you can choose to interrupt for free.

If you want 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.

Variant: Interrupt Points

If players are spending their inspiration points often to make interrupts—or you want your monsters to be more reactive in general—consider this *Interrupt Points* variant.

At the start of each significant scene (such as a combat encounter), the GM gains one free *interrupt point* per player. The GM may spend one of these points to steal the initiative, but can only use one point per round. Any unspent points expire at the end of the scene.

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 GM divides the monsters into two taggable groups—the hobgoblin and the goblins. The *Interrupt Points* variant is in play, so the GM gains three interrupt points for this scene.

At the start of a new round, Chansi makes an attack and then passes over to Valiant.

GM: The hobgoblin roars an order out to the goblins and they spring forward. Chansi, what do you do?
Chansi: I fire an arrow straight at the hobgoblin... (rolls 11) ...oof, that's a bad shot.
GM: Your arrow misses by a wide margin. The hobgoblin shouts a command and three of the goblins turn to look at you, Chansi.
Chansi: Uh, that doesn't sound good. Hey, Valiant, might need you to draw some attention here...
Valiant: I'm on it. I move to cover Chansi and strike at the nearest goblin with my war pick (rolls 16).
GM: The goblin curses aloud as you strike it. How much damage does it take?
Valiant: 6 points. Then, with my *War Priest initiative*, I swing around to attack another goblin (rolls 17).
GM: Another hit—the goblin screeches as it takes...?
Valiant: 7 points of bludgeoning damage. Now *that* should get their attention.
GM: It does—three goblins are now focused on you.

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

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

Valiant: Ok Clanda, you're up next.
Clanda: Perfect. I—
GM: Before you can act, Clanda, the hobgoblin interrupts... (spends an interrupt point) ...and leaps towards Valiant. She swings her longsword in a fierce two-handed arc and hits, dealing 6 damage.
Valiant: Ouch.
GM: With the goblins around you, Valiant, the hobgoblin uses *Martial Advantage* to deal an additional 7 points of damage.
Valiant: Son of a...
GM: The hobgoblin laughs coldly, licking the blood from her blade. "You have my attention *now*, little cleric," she sneers. "I think I'll take your right hand as a trophy." 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...

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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, 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 takes damage for failing to dodge, then *additional* damage (the crit damage) for critically failing—two consequences.

Boons

When a character succeeds with an ability check or attack roll, something good happens and they get what they wanted. The type of this reward is often clear from the context of the character's action—you hit the monster, you unlock the chest, you identify the potion, etc.

But if the reward *isn't* clear—or you want to give a character an *extra* boon for a critical success—consider some of the examples below.

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. The type of this consequence is often clear from the context of the character's action—you take damage from an attack, you anger the guards, you fall into the pit, etc.

But if the consequence *isn't* clear—or you want to give a character an *extra* consequence for a critical failure—consider some of the examples below.

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 may choose to *succeed at a cost* instead—you get what you want, but something bad happens to you as a consequence.

This may require some negotiation with the GM—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	You lose one or more hit dice
3	You lose 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	You gain a level of exhaustion
10	You lose some gold
11	An NPC is put in a perilous situation
12	You lose renown with a person or faction

Examples of Play

Here are two examples of how to use *degrees of success* in your game—one to demonstrate *Success at a Cost* and a negotiation, 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.

GM: The ground is crumbling rapidly beneath your feet, Chansi—but you see a rope hanging ahead, over the dark abyss.
Chansi: I leap out and grab hold of it.
GM: 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!
GM: 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?
GM: It has to be something precious to you.
Chansi: Ah. Well I was really hoping to use this healing potion later...
GM: 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...

Viridan, meanwhile, has bluffed his way into a meeting with a local lord—Erasius, Lord of Brekenwell. Viridian hopes to convince the lord to lend his support in the defence of a nearby village.

GM: Lord Erasius looks at you coldly, Viridian—he doesn't seem impressed. "And why should I trust you, stranger?"
Viridian: Hmm, good question. Can I lie, saying that I'm nobility with access to the king? I'll tell Erasius that—if he will support us—I can put in a few words to boost his reputation with the king.
GM: Ok, that sounds like a tricky lie to me. You haven't had time to prepare this, and you don't have any items to back your claim, so it's an off-the-cuff bluff—make a DC 25 Charisma check.
Viridian: Can I use History with this?
GM: Yes, you know enough about the local lands to throw around a few names.
Viridian: Great. That's... (rolls 13) ...eep, not good.
GM: 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 your key to power, helping you to discover new abilities and reach higher peaks of strength. But you don't gain experience by staying in your comfort zone—the only way to grow is to push beyond your limits and brave the dangers of the world.

With *Active* XP, you don't gain experience for simply killing monsters—instead, you gain experience by being active in one of three fields of adventure: discovery, recovery, and adversity.

1. **Discovery:** Explore the world, meet new people, and uncover secrets—hidden dungeons, ancient cults, legendary monsters. The more valuable and rare your discovery, the more experience you gain.
2. **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.
3. **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 can survive.

Leave your comfort zone behind, go adventuring in the dangerous wilds, and get into trouble—take risks, overcome challenges, and reap the rewards.

Treasure-centric Rewards

Active XP encourages players to hunt for rare treasures, and so is best suited to campaigns that put a significant focus on exploration and treasure-hunting—megadungeons, hexcrawls, point crawls, West Marches campaigns, etc.

Advancement

Don't use the standard 5e leveling table with *Active* XP—instead, use the *Character Advancement* table listed below. This demonstrates the amount of experience a character needs to spend per level in order to level up.

Character Advancement

Level	XP Needed	Level	XP Needed
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

Spending Experience

When you gain XP, you can spend it to level up. If the *Training* rules (p150) are in play, spend the XP after you have completed the required training time.

Valiant, a 1st-level 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 advance to 2nd-level—leaving 50 XP remaining.

Awarding Experience

Use the following guides to 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, cities—will be CL0. It's no challenge to live in a sanctuary.

XP per Challenge Level

CL	XP Gained	CL	XP Gained
0	1	11	87
1	3	12	122
2	4	13	170
3	6	14	238
4	8	15	333
5	12	16	467
6	16	17	653
7	23	18	915
8	32	19	1,280
9	44	20	1,790
10	62	—	—

As a starting point, you can base the *Challenge Level* on the average level of the adventure or current area being explored by the players.

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 you choose the *Relative Difficulty*, consider the number of resources the party expended. 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:

XP

Character XP: Challenge Level x Relative Difficulty

Party XP: Character XP x Party Size

To demonstrate this, we see Chansi use lockpicking to avoid a dangerous fight. She gains some XP as a reward for using her skills to safely overcome a threatening situation.

Chansi is currently exploring the *Vault of Sorrow*, an area designed for 3rd-level characters. To hide from a patrol of skeletons, she quietly unpicks a locked door and slips out of sight—avoiding a dangerous fight.

The GM 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, we see Valiant and Clanda discover a hidden entrance to a secret dungeon. They barely manage to survive a battle against its dangerous guardians, and are rewarded with a sizable amount of XP for their efforts.

In the *Nightless Forest*, a dangerous area for 5th-level characters, Valiant and Clanda finally uncover a long-hidden entrance to the *Shattered Underhall*.

The GM awards some discovery XP. The CL is 5 (12 XP) and they had a hard (x2) time finding the entrance, so Valiant and Clanda each receive 24 XP.

Deep within the Underhall, they battle against the *Court of Lies*—though eventually victorious, they spend many resources and almost die in the process.

The GM 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 depends on two primary 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.

The higher the CL, the bigger the danger—but the more treasure you are likely to find.

Treasure per Challenge Level

CL	GP Gained	CL	GP Gained
0	0	11	215
1	7	12	302
2	10	13	422
3	15	14	592
4	20	15	828
5	28	16	1,160
6	40	17	1,624
7	56	18	2,274
8	78	19	3,185
9	110	20	4,456
10	154	—	—

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 anything of value long before the party arrive.

You'll need to find and face the biggest threats if you want to recover the rarest treasures—so be bold.

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.

Magic Items & Gold

Magic items and basic, common currency (such as copper, silver, and gold pieces) don't count as treasure or reward any XP—so don't include their valuation 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

Treasure: Challenge Level x Threat Rating

Hoard: Individual Treasure x Party Size

To demonstrate this in action, below is an outline for a 1st-level adventure—the *Tomb of the Bone Prince*.

The GM is building an adventure for four 1st-level characters, with a CL of 1 (7 gp) and an average (x1) threat rating. This means that the party should find around 28 gp (7 x 4) of actual treasure in the adventure (not including any random silver or gold).

The GM scatters the treasure across 7 encounters:

1. **Encounter:** The Bone Sentinels.
2. **Encounter:** The False Prince. Rewards a 4 gp treasure (some carved bone dice).
3. **Challenge:** A secret passageway to the undertomb.
4. **Encounter:** Madrigor, the Blind Cleric. Rewards a 4 gp treasure (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 20 gp (well-cut rubies).

Here, Valiant and Chansi return to town with some recovered treasure in hand. Chansi sells her treasure for gold, while Valiant donates his treasure to his church.

Chansi and Valiant return to Darrowmore from their expedition into the *Rat's Nest*. Chansi carries a jade figurine worth 12 gp. She sells it to a local collector, exchanging the figurine for 12 gp and 120 XP.

Valiant also found some treasure—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—including helpers, followers, and henchmen.

Solo Treasure: Stealing or hiding treasure from the rest of the party doesn't grant you extra XP—when you gain XP for treasure, everyone gets an equal cut.

When the group wasn't looking, Clanda secretly palmed an extra ruby from the treasure pile—she later sells it to gain 7 gp and 70 XP. Clanda keeps the gold but shares the XP with the rest of the party.

24

Dangerous Magic

Magic is a powerful force that can rewrite the laws of reality—turn ice into fire, restore life to the dead, travel great distances in a heartbeat. Magic can grant unimaginable power, but it is not without risk—channeling raw energies can be deadly 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 turns 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.

As your die shrinks it becomes increasingly more likely that you will trigger further burnout in future—so be careful with your die.

Burnout Die

1d12 → 1d10 → 1d8 → 1d6 → 1d4

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.

If a consequence doesn't fully apply to you, or doesn't make sense for the situation, pick one that does. Alternatively, the GM may pick a consequence for you.

Burnout Consequences

d100	Consequence
01-05	**Drained:** Lose (spell level) hit dice.
06-15	**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:** You have disadvantage when casting spells 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:** You have advantage when casting spells for (spell level) rounds.
100	**Restored:** Reset the burnout die to d12.

Burnout is not a Failure

Suffering burnout doesn't mean your spellcasting failed—it just means that you were hurt somehow during the attempt. Roll to attack as per normal, resolve any hits or misses, and apply any burnout consequences only after you've finished resolving your spellcasting effects.

Clanda: Ok, these myconids are *really* starting to annoy me now. Good thing I've been saving this *Fireball* for a special occasion...
GM: 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.
GM: 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*.

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 a 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: *Finally*, that's the myconids burnt to a crisp. Great job, me. Ok let's take a short rest, I need to recover some burnout. Chansi, have you got any of that arcane tea left?
Chansi: No, you finished that all yesterday.
Clanda: How about your mageblood potion.
Chansi: What, the potion you drank two days ago?
Clanda: *Fine*. 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 of Burnout	Die Size	Risk of Burnout
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. Some forms of magic are innate, controlled, or otherwise rendered harmless—these *safe magics* don't require a burnout roll when used:

- **Class Features**: Effects gained through class features—such as *Channel Divinity* or *Lay on Hands*.
- **Racial Features:** Spells gained through a racial ability—such as the tiefling's *Infernal Legacy*.
- **Magic Items:** Magic items—such as wands and weapons—channel their own arcane 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.

As he rolls to cast *Silence*, Viridian triggers an instance of magical burnout. The player decides that Viridian accidentally sneezed as he was speaking the spell's verbal component—the resultant shock of interruped arcane power stripped the tiefling of one hit die.

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 GM'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, predicable, 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.

Here we see Clanda approach a vortex of wild magic, making her more likely to burnout when spellcasting.

GM: 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*...

Regional Sizes

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. Use sizes that are appropriate for your adventure or setting.

GM: Through the forest, you see a stone building with a ruined spire in the distance. You feel the *calming* power of holy ground even from this distance.
Valiant: Finally, Unity Spire. I'll let Viridian know I've found it with a *Sending* spell.
GM: Ok, make your burnout check.
Valiant: No problem—this calm power pushes my d8 burnout die up two sizes to d12.

Burnout Die Size Limits

Your burnout die can't 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.

GM: 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?
GM: 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 your magical burnout.

Below are listed two example consumables: mageblood potions and elixirs of inner peace.

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 a small portion of magical burnout when you drink this potion—the better the quality, the more burnout you recover.

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. But if you want to customize the experience to better suit your own adventure and/or campaign setting, consider the following variant dials.

A Safe Cantrips

If you want characters to be able to cast cantrips without any risk, then consider this *Safe Cantrips* variant.

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.
GM: No need—as a 0th-level spell, your safe cantrip doesn't strain your body with wild magic power.
Clanda: *Even better.*

B Wild Zones

You may want to use *Magical Burnout* for just a short time in your campaign—to add theming to one 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, characters 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.

C 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

Spellcasting Rank	Examples	Maximum Burnout
Full Caster	Bard, Cleric, Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard.	d12
Half Caster	Ranger, Paladin.	d10
Third Caster	Eldritch Knight, Arcane Trickster.	d8

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.

D Custom Consequences

Burnout consequences can come in many different forms. Depending on your game and campaign setting, you may wish to customize the *Burnout Consequences* table to make burnout more severe or less punishing.

For example, if your game features *Stress*, *Survival Conditions*, and *Wear & Tear*, consider the variant table below to put a much larger focus on stress, equipment, and supplies—the more powerful the spell, the bigger the damage inflicted during burnout.

Custom Consequences

d100	Minor (SL 1-2)	Moderate (SL 3-4)
01-45	Gain minor Stress	Gain moderate Stress
46-70	An item gains 1 notch	An item gains 2 notches
71-80	Gain 1 hunger	Gain 2 hunger
81-90	Gain 1 thirst	Gain 2 thirst
91-00	Gain 1 fatigue	Gain 2 fatigue
d100	**Major (SL 5-6)**	**Monstrous (SL 7-9)**
01-45	Gain major Stress	Gain monstrous Stress
46-70	An item gains 4 notches	An item gains 8 notches
71-80	Gain 4 hunger	Gain 6 hunger
81-90	Gain 4 thirst	Gain 6 thirst
91-00	Gain 4 fatigue	Gain 6 fatigue

PART 6

Exploration

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Take long-distance travels with the journey phase.

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What can you see in the dark places of the world?

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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.

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. It's about 45 miles away, so the journey should take 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.

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, and pack up camp.

- **Check the weather:** The weather can have a drastic impact on your travel plans—especially if you're not properly 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 a good meal, 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 confirm the adventuring party's location—did you all stay on track, or have you veered off in the wrong direction?
- **Forage:** The forager makes a foraging check to see if they were able to gather any food or water supplies throughout the day's travel.
- **Eat dinner:** Eat some food and drink some water to help recover from the day's travel.

◇ Night
The night is dark and full of terrors—an unwelcoming time for travelers out in the wilds. Travel is very difficult and it's *very* easy to get lost in the dark, so best 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, and the peddler gratefully gives them a freshly caught rabbit in exchange. They continue on.

As dusk settles, the adventurers set up camp for the night. Clanda is on lookout, so she casts a few *Alarm* spells around the camp's perimeter. Chansi cooks the peddler's rabbit meat for everyone to eat, while Valiant checks their progress on his map—everything seems on track, thankfully.

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.

3 Arrive
After enough days of travel have passed—if you didn't lose your way—you'll arrive at your destination.

Variant: Stress
If you're using the *Stress* rules, check the *Journey Arrival* table below 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.

A The Guide
The guide makes sure that everyone is heading in the right direction. If the guide fails, you'll become lost and the journey will take longer as you try to retrace your steps.

If you're the guide, roll Intelligence on the *Guidance* table at the end of the day to see if you were able to keep everyone 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.

B 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're 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.

GM: Chansi, roll a Foraging check to see if you found anything. You're in thin woodland, so it takes a little effort—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.

C 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're the scout, you're responsible for making any perception checks during the day to spot incoming risks and dangers—the GM 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.

D The Lookout

The lookout protects the camp at night. If the lookout fails, you risk being attacked while you sleep.

If you're the lookout, you're responsible for making perception checks during the night to spot incoming threats—the GM will notify you of anything worth rolling for. The lookout can't 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 an 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.

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

Encounters

During a journey, the GM 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.

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.

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 GM 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.

3 Generate Encounters

Now it's time to generate some specific encounters for your journey. There are four broad categories of encounter: character, social, skill, and combat.

Pick a variety of encounters suitable for your journey, or roll on the *Encounter Type* table to choose one at random.

A. **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* to engage with the question), they gain a point of inspiration.
B. **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.
C. **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.
D. **Combat:** Enemies attack the party, forcing them to flee or defend themselves—a group of bandits, a wild pack of wolves, a hungry dragon.

Once you know the type of the encounter, generate the exact details using your preferred encounter tables.

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.

> **GM:** While you're all travelling in the afternoon, conversation turns to family. Clanda, tell us a good memory you have of your parents.

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're 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're ashamed of
63-64	Something you're 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?
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	Friendly 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	Hostile 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	Highwaymen demand your money or your life
16-20	Two groups of people are brawling near an overturned cart, each blaming the other
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're 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

Hostile Social Encounters (cont)

d100	Hostile Encounter
66-70	Three men around a campfire offer you some food, but it's not animal meat they're cooking...
71-75	A wailing ghost stands in the middle of the road
76-80	A group of hooded cultists emerge, loudly proclaiming that you're 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

Discoveries (cont)

d100	Discovery
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	The 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

Journey Seeds

d100	Encounter Phases						Discovery
	Da.	Mo.	No.	Af.	Du.	Ni.	
01-05	3	6	5	1	5	5	Morning
06-10	6	4	3	5	1	3	Afternooon
11-15	2	1	5	4	6	4	—
16-20	3	1	1	5	3	5	—
21-25	1	6	2	2	3	6	Afternooon
26-30	3	6	2	3	6	3	—
31-35	4	3	1	2	4	1	—
36-40	5	4	2	5	5	4	Afternooon
41-45	5	1	5	6	6	2	Morning
46-50	6	6	4	6	1	2	—
51-55	1	4	3	2	5	5	Morning
56-60	1	4	5	2	6	4	Afternooon
61-65	5	1	2	1	6	3	—
66-70	1	3	1	4	5	4	Afternooon
71-75	5	6	1	2	1	2	Morning
76-80	6	3	2	3	5	5	—
81-85	3	5	2	5	3	1	Morning
86-90	2	3	5	6	5	2	Afternooon
91-95	3	6	4	4	4	6	Morning
96-00	3	1	4	4	5	4	—

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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* elf 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 to keep things moving during play.

However, if distance is particularly relevant in your story—or you're using automated tools to track vision—you may find the original 5e rules for lighting more suitable.

Lighting Levels

Light can be measured—and described—with five basic 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 in their environment. Don't worry too much about precise distances at this point—simply apply the same level of lighting to the entire area of interest for simplicity.

Light Levels

Level	Light	Description
0	Darkest	No light at all—total darkness, a windowless room, 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.

0 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 as described below—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.

1 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 are the *Partially Blinded* condition instead.

2 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.

3 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.

4 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—for example, tinted glasses crafted by an artisan may help you to block out brightest light.

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

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 are also a factor. Use the *Light Sources* table below to determine how much light a particular item (or creature) should emit.

Total Light: 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.

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.

A 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

Light (Tiny)

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 it is snuffed out, deduct 15 minutes from the remaining burn time.

- **Residue:** This common candle produces wax and a noticeable smell as it burns.
- **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

Light (Small)

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 it is extinguished, deduct 15 minutes from the remaining burn time.

You can spend an action to plant a torch in soft ground 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

Light (Medium)

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 it is extinguished, deduct 15 minutes from the remaining burn time.

You can spent 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 goes out 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 *Concentration*.
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 *Concentration*.
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 *Concentration*.
Produce Flame	Cantrip	PHB	Small	+1	Now requires *Concentration*.
Wall of Fire	4th	PHB	Medium	+2	—
Wall of Light	5th	XGtE	Large	+4	—

B 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.

C 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.

GM: 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? Hmm, so with my *Light* spell (+1 light) and Valiant's torch (+1 light), that should get us up to *brightest* light?
GM: Yes, the chamber is brightly illuminated right now—you can see clearly across the lava pool.
Clanda: Excellent. I'll 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.

D 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*...

E Items and Gear

Some equipment, often magical in nature, can 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.

GM: 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?
GM: 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
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

During your adventures, you may be able to buy, craft, or loot special items that can influence 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

Light (Medium)

This flare emits a *medium* (+2) amount of light for up to 1 hour. Once lit, a flare can't be extinguished unless it is doused in water—at which point, the flare is ruined and can't be lit again.

- **Launch:** When you activate a flare, you can launch it up to 120 ft away.

Darksight Goggles

Wearable | Rare

These magical goggles—set with delicate crystal lenses and arcane sigils—amplify light and help you to see in the dark.

- **Sight Beyond Sight:** When you wear these goggles, you gain darkvision.
- **Fragile:** These goggles are fragile and easily cracked—be careful not to drop or injure them.

Darkstone Shard

Rare

A shard of darkstone taken from the Shadowfell. This small, bloodthirsty stone absorbs light from the surroundings and creates pockets of darkness. Thieves and rogues are known to prize these shards.

- **Light Devourer:** 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).
- **Overeater:** If left exposed to bright light for longer than 1 hour, the darkstone cracks and turns to dust.

Hellfire Torch

Light (medium) | Uncommon

This specially-treated torch burns twice as bright and twice as hot as normal, producing a *medium* (+2) amount of light for 30 minutes before it turns to ash.

Lesser Sunblade

Weapon (Longsword) | Rare

This magical sword, crafted by the elves of Sindoril, hums with radiant energy. A favored weapon of dungeon delvers—when commanded, it glows with radiant light.

- **Radiant Power:** This blade has 6 charges of power, and it regains 1d3 expended charges at dawn.
- **Radiant Strike:** When you hit a creature with an attack using this sword, you can spend 1 charge to deal an extra 1d4 radiant damage.
- **A Light in the Dark:** While holding this sword, you can spend a bonus action and one charge to speak a command word and emit a glowing white light (+1 light) from the blade.

  The glow persists until a) it is dismissed as a bonus action, b) you let go of the sword, or c) 1 hour passes.

Potion of Cats Eye

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 this ability lasts for.

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

Light (large) | Rare

Crafted by the dwarves of Kadrun Volk for use in the undermines, solar lanterns burn with blue fire.

- **Solar Beam:** This solar lantern burns through oil three times as fast as normal, but produces a *large* (+4) amount of light.

Tinted Glasses

Wearable | Uncommon

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:** You gain the *Partially Blinded* condition and can reduce your effective light level by 1.
- **Fragile:** These glasses are fragile and easily cracked, so be careful not to drop or injure them.

PART 7

Life & Death

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Gain lingering wounds and permanent injuries.

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Persistent death saves and revised resurrection rules.

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Cheat death with rare fate points.

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Infect your world with contagious diseases.

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Track hunger, thirst, and fatigue on your travels.

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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 fortunate 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.

GM: The wolf bites you fiercely, Sarien, causing 7 points of damage.
Sarien: Gah, I'm *bloodied* now.
GM: 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 below 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

GM: 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 your life difficult with exhaustion. You can spend one hour to treat a wound using first-aid knowledge and supplies—make an Intelligence (Medicine) or Wisdom (Medicine) 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, roll to see if your wounds have healed—make a Constitution (Medicine) check (DC 15) 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.

Reopened Wounds

If you are critically hit during combat, your treated wounds may reopen. When you take 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.

Untreated wounds: Any *untreated* wound you have fails this check 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.

GM: The werewolf's razor sharp claws slash wildly at you, Viridian. It's a critical hit—you 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...
GM: Those claws have ripped open your bandages, Viridian, and blood pours from your chest wound. You start to feel exhausted again from the wound.
Viridian: Great. Can this day get any worse?
GM: The werewolf slashes at you again. It's another critical hit.
Viridian: Son of a...

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 through the normal means (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 GM to establish any notable in-game effects beyond the exhaustion increase.

GM: 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. That means a violent injury on my... (rolls 1) ...arm.
GM: 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 a 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.
GM: 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 add 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.

GM: 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 and causes exhaustion until it is treated. There are three common 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 an artificial device that can replace or augment a missing (or injured) body part—such as an arm, leg, or eye. You may find prosthetics on your adventures or buy them from artificers, crafters, and healers.

False Leg

Prosthesis (Leg) | 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

Some prosthetics have been augmented with magic, granting them extra properties. These are much rarer in the world—and far, far more expensive.

Arm of Living Bark

Prosthesis (Arm) | Rare

A prosthetic arm crafted from living wood. It has a tendency to reach towards bright sunlight when the owner is distracted. 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) | Rare

A prosthetic foot inscribed with an air enchantment. It weighs half as much as you would normally expect for its size. 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) | Rare

A metal prosthetic hand, dwarven-forged and inscribed with arcane glyphs and sigils. It crackles if left uncovered in the rain. 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.

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Death & Resurrection

There are only two certainties in life: death and taxes. Throughout their career, adventurers face danger and destruction at every turn—and not everyone is lucky enough to make it back to town alive.

This chapter sets out the *Dying* condition and includes rules for persistent death saves, funerals, character wills, and resurrection magic.

Dying

When you are reduced to 0 hit points, you gain the *Dying* condition. You can't move, and your ability to talk is limited. 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 death saving throws, you die.

GM: The drow's hooked blade tears into you, Krazak, dealing 13 points of slashing damage.
Krazak: Down to 0 hp—damn it, I'm *dying* here.
GM: Ravna looms over you with a sadistic smile. "Any last words, dwarf, before I send you to the grave?"
Krazak: Screw. You.
GM: "Two words well spent," sneers Ravna.

Death Saving Throws

While you are dying, you must make a death saving throw at the start of your turn to see how long you can cling onto life—if you fail three death saving throws, you die.

When you make a death saving throw, roll a d20 and check the *Death Saving Throw* table below to see what happens to you.

Death Saving Throw

d20	Outcome
1	You fail two death saving throws.
2-9	You fail one death saving throw.
10-19	No change.
20	You regain 1 hit point and the *dying* condition ends.

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 one death saving throw. Critical damage, likewise, causes you to fail one death saving throw.

Limited Awareness

When a character has the *Dying* condition, their awareness and ability to communicate with other characters is severely restricted—dying is hard work.

Choose your character's two words carefully for each round, 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

No corpse should 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 GM *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.

> **GM:** A gruff, dwarven priest approaches you all after the funeral, bearing Krazak's last known will.
> **Clanda:** A *will*? You're telling me that brute knew how to write? 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". Cute.
> **Viridian:** Ah that 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 PC.
- **One Behind:** Start one level lower than your old PC.
- **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

Death is not always 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 gemstones can't be bought on the open market—finding one may be a whole adventure in itself.

Lost Knowledge: Death has a price—a character that has been dead for longer than a day will lose any unspent experience points when resurrected.

Resurrection Spells

Spell	Level	Time Limit	Component
Revivify	3rd	1 minute	3 × Pristine diamonds
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

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.

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Cheating Fate

In the face of certain death, a lucky adventurer might just find a way to cheat fate and live on to fight another day. Today is a good day to survive.

This chapter introduces *fate points* for player characters and how you can use them in your game.

Fate Points

If you would suffer a killing blow or fail your last death saving throw, you may 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 GM exactly how it is you managed to survive your ordeal.

GM: 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... I'm dead. Or I *would* be if I didn't have one last *fate point* to use. Perhaps the spear *missed* me...?
GM: 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.

Why Use Fate?

When you roll dice, fate can be cruel—even *unfair*—at times. Fate points give players a way to mitigate the meanest twists of fate without neutering the threat entirely.

Gaining Fate

1st-level characters start with one fate point—a reward for becoming an adventurer in the first place. You can hold up to three fate points at any one time, and fate points can't be exchanged between characters.

Beyond this, fate points are *extremely* rare. To gain fate, players must face—and defeat—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.

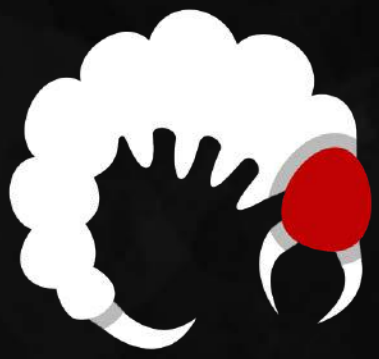
One Monster, One Point: A fated monster rewards only 1 fate point in total when defeated—the players must decide who among them is lucky enough to take it.

GM: You hear that the black dragon Kaladax has laid waste to Merrowford and taken residence in the burnt wreckage of the town.
Clanda: Interesting. Is he a *fated* dragon?
GM: Kaladax is a major power, and certainly fated.
Viridian: Could be worth investigating. I don't like being fate-less now, myself...

Spending Fate

When you spend a fate point, you (usually) can't 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.



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Deadly Disease

The world, for all its occasional beauty, is a filthy place. Monsters aren't the only threat to your survival—plague and disease stalk the land, destroying villages and decimating cities. Sometimes the greatest threat to the city isn't the wild dragon—it's the lone child with a lingering cough.

This chapter provides rules on catching and treating contagious diseases, and a selection of pre-made diseases to use in your game.

What is a Disease?

A disease is an ongoing sickness that can infect your character and spread to those around you, from the mundane (flu, chickenpox, cholera) to the magical (mind worms, dragonlung, gelatinous boils).

Diseases become more severe over time, progressing through 4 stages—so try to stay healthy.

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.

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 can't 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.

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.

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/drink something that's been contaminated—foul water, moldy bread, rotten meat.

GM: 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.
GM: Black ichor and pus splatter you in thick, wet clumps. The smell of rotten flesh is overwhelming.
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.

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.

3 Infection

Once the initial incubation period has passed, it's time to see if your character was infected and displays 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.

GM: 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).
GM: 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. I. Swear. Where's a cleric when you need them...

Wounds and Multiple Exposure

If you had any open wounds when you were exposed to the disease—or you were exposed multiple times—it becomes much more likely that you were infected. Make your *Infection* check with disadvantage.

Living with Disease

Once your disease starts to display symptoms, the real battle for your health begins. A runny nose, a splitting headache, a bad cough—manage your pain as best you can while you fight back the sickness.

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.

GM: 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*.
GM: Your fever has broken at last, and you think you're over the worst of it now. Your flu is in decline.
Viridan: 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. There are two main ways you can spread a disease: by touch and through air.

A 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.

B 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.

GM: 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.
GM: 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?
GM: 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

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

To surprise your players with a sickness unique to your world, follow these steps to brew your own diseases.

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 of stopping this sickness.	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.

Step 4: Transmission

Next, pick how your disease is transmitted. Usually this is through touch or air, but there may be other triggers.

> The GM 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 throat infection that can lead to permanent scarring	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 as 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 lives 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
1 day

Disease · Rare

Often mistaken for influenza at first, swollen buboes mark the body and a near-certain death sentence.

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
2 days

Disease · Common

Tiny, itchy spots that spread across your entire body. Very contagious, but not usually life-threatening.

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 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
1 day

Disease · Common

One drink of bad water and you'll be curled up by the toilet for a week—or die from dehydration.

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.

Viridian took a cup of water from the keg. By the time he saw the dead rat floating in it, it was too late.

Diphtheria

Touch, Air · DC 15
3 days

Disease · Rare

A nasty infection of the throat that can cause permanent scarring if it penetrates the skin.

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 permanent scars from your skin ulcers.

Krazak's head was pounding. This wasn't a normal hangover—something was wrong...

Dysentery

Touch (excrement) · DC 20
1 day

Disease · Common

Easy to catch and painful to endure, one sip of dirty water can be enough to ruin your whole week.

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
2 days

Disease · Common

A harmless cough and a slight fever can quickly turn into something much more serious without bed rest.

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 can't 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.

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.

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.

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.

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 stonescale.

Clanda scratched at her arm. Gray flakes of dead skin peeled off. She had to find a cure—and *fast*...

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.

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.

Tapeworm

Touch (excrement) · DC 15
Disease · Common · 1 week

Tiny parasites that hide away in rotten meat and excrement. Watch what you eat.

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 painful stomach cramps for one week.

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.

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	You suffer 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 can't move or act on your own power.
Cured	You feel fragile for the next week.

Whooping Cough

Air · DC 15
Disease · Common · 1 week

Fits of violent coughing followed by a 'whooping' inhale of breathe—and sometimes, broken ribs.

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 can't move without immense pain.
Cured	You have an annoying cough for the next week.

Chansi coughed, swore, and coughed again. Her ribs were so sore, she could barely stand straight.

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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.

A. **Hunger:** Few things burn through calories as fast as adventuring, so keep some snacks in your pocket.
B. **Thirst:** Adventure, travel, and combat are thirsty work. Keep a waterskin close by to avoid dehydration.
C. **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—if left untreated—can eventually lead to increasing levels of exhaustion. Depending on the situation, this can be a real problem for your character:

Viridian has been travelling at speed through the Emerald Rift for two days, chased by the relentless *Witch of Gloamgard*. His supplies are running low, and —due to the chase—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 and use 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 and hard to come by.

If your characters have easy access to food and water—or time is not an issue, or survival is 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 GM—or whoever else is keeping track of time—announces the changes in character conditions when appropriate.

GM: 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.

GM: The orc clubs you for 9 hit points, Sarien.
Sarien: Ouch, that knocks me unconscious.
GM: 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 GM's discretion—or, if using the *Degrees of Success* rules, offer to gain a condition and succeed at a cost.

GM: To cross the pit requires a simple jump, Clanda—roll a DC 10 Athletics check.
Clanda: Ok.. (rolls 9) ...augh, so close!
GM: 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 GM, 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.

GM: 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

As your character's condition worsens, they become increasingly more exhausted. 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.

Persistent: Once a condition has begun to cause exhaustion, that exhaustion remains on your character until the condition is sufficiently improved (such as by being reduced to stage 4 or lower).

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 GM 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
1-2	+1 Hunger	5-6	+1 Fatigue
3-4	+1 Thirst	—	—

GM: 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. 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 watch out for the weather and 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 GM describes the baseline temperature when appropriate—often when you enter or research a new region, dungeon, or lair:

GM: It's starting to rain outside and, as you step out, an *uncomfortably* cold wind blows past. You think it might become *unbearably* cold outside tonight if the rain continues to pour.

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.

GM: 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 scoring 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.

32

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 lasting consequences these lingering, mental afflictions can have 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 fundamental nature of your character, the greater the amount of 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 GM will usually notify you that this is a risk *before* you make your attempt.

Here we see Chansi attempt—and fail—to pick a pick.

Chansi: Ok, let's see what's in this chest. I want to pick the lock on this thing—what's the DC?
GM: It's a secure metal chest, so DC 20.
Chansi: Easy. Lemme just... (rolls 15) ...ugh, fail.
GM: 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 a 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.

GM: You smell something foul, Viridian. Behind the wooden door, you can hear a faint buzzing sound.
Viridian: I open the door cautiously.
GM: 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.
GM: Horrifying though this is, you manage to retain your composure. Perhaps this isn't the first time you've seen a heap of rotting corpses?

Here we see Valiant as he returns to town from an adventure, only to discover that he has been betrayed by a trusted mentor and his sister is in grave peril.

With his world turned upside down—and the town burning all around him—Valiant faces an almost impossible Stress check.

GM: Fire rages through the town. You hear a scream, Valiant, coming from the church. What do you do?
Valiant: Does it sound like Zelrya?
GM: It does, yes.
Valiant: I throw my shield aside and run through the burning streets, leaving the others behind.
GM: As you pass through the burning archway of Granite Pearl, you see Zelrya at the foot of the church steps. She is 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!
GM: Your sister lies dying, and your mentor has betrayed you, Valiant. Make a Stress check, DC 30.
Valiant: That... (rolls 22) ...bastard.
GM: 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.

GM: 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.

GM: The dragon lashes out at you, Clanda, swinging its huge tail. Make a defense roll, DC 32.
Clanda: I... (rolls a natural 1) ...ouch, take a critical hit.
GM: 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.
GM: 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 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 GM's discretion)—rogues benefits 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.

GM: 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.
GM: 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.
GM: 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.

GM: 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.
GM: Ok—it's been an easy day, so make a DC 10 Wisdom check.
Sarien: No problem... (rolls 17).
GM: 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

GM: 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.
GM: 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 you to manage stress—magic gear, soothing teas, precious potions, etc.

Soothing Stones

Item (Small) | Common

A pair of small, stone balls engraved with dwarven runes. They make a soothing sound when held in one hand.

- **Relaxing Sound:** During camp, if you successfully *Relax in Solitude*, you heal an additional +1 Stress.

Elixir of Sanity

Potion | Consumable

This thick purple elixir looks almost alive. When you stare at it, you get the feeling you're being watched.

- **Iron Soul:** 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, you can increase your maximum stress by +8.

Book of Sermons

Item (Small) | Common

A cheap but illustrated book of inspiring sermons from a particular religion.

- **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.
- **Preach:** When you read from this book, you have advantage on Charisma (Religion) ability checks while preaching about this book's subject religion.

Greenleaf Tea

Item (Small) | Common

A packet of halfling tea leaves. One packet contains enough leaves for five separate brews.

- **Delicious Tea:** If you successfully *Brew Drinks* using one charge of tea leaves, each person who takes a drink can heal 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.

A 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.

B 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).

C 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.

D 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 overhauling 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.

E Stressful Attacks

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

Level 5 Supporter

Medium aberration, neutral — Standard (450 XP)

Armor Class	14	**Damage**	8
Attack Bonus	+5	**Speed**	30 ft
Hit Points	45 (23)	**Spell DCs**	13, 10

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

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

A grinning skull of an monstrous creature hangs on the wall. 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. The skull then crumbles into dust.

- **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.

F 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:

Leveling Stress

Maximum Stress: 20 + level + (4 x INT)

Snapping Points: 50% / 75% / 87.5%

Minimum Stress

Your baseline maximum stress as calculated here can't 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.

G Light & Shadow

If you are using the *Light & Shadow* (p113) rules and want visibility to be an even bigger threat to your players, consider this variant.

If you are blinded, you are vulnerable to stress—you gain twice the amount of stress as you normal would.

H 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.

I 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 from his daily prayer. Because of *Slow Recovery*, however, he instead heals only 0.5 Stress.

PART 8

Rest & Downtime

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Get your breath back with a short rest.

34 Long Rest p147
Take and long rest and catch up with some downtime.

35 Leveling Up p150
Train with a mentor and unlock your full potential.

33

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 your 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 howl, the other wolves 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 a short rest, whilst you're catching your breath, you can perform some *basic* activities—such as the example tasks listed here. Complicated or prolonged 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 (p120) is in effect and you have lost half of your hit points, you will need to use a first-aid kit—or similar medical 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* (p132) are in effect, you can use this time to satiate your hunger or thirst.

In addition, if you are suffering from exhaustion caused by one or more of your surival conditions, you can remove it if that condition has sufficiently improved.

◇ Recover Magical Burnout

If you are suffering from *Magical Burnout* (p102), 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 (p60) are in effect, you can change your three selected quickdraw items.

◇ Treat Wounds

If you are suffering from any *lingering wounds* (p120), you can treat them if you have sufficient first-aid resources.

◇ Research/Investigate

You spend your time researching, reading, or investigating something within reach—such as an encrypted book, an unfamiliar insect, 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.

1 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.
- **Animal Handling:** You help by checking the site isn't in the territory of any dangerous, wild animals.
- **Nature:** You help by finding good wood—and other natural fuel—for the campfire.
- **Religion:** You help by channeling divine power from your deity to bless the campsite.

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.

2 The Lookout

It's a big 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 can't join in with any camp activities besides eating, drinking, and sleeping.

3 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 campsite activities can allow you to regain expended hit dice. These activities stack with each other—if you eat a hot meal, drink a restorative, and get a good nights sleep, you can regain 3 expended 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

People like 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 appropriate crafting 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? She could do with some inspiration.
Clanda: Thanks, but I'm too busy being on lookout to listen to your amateur fumblings.
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.

4 Getting Some Sleep

Sometimes the best way to clear your mind is to shut it down for a while—rest is often 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 party member has a bedroll or tent, they make their roll with advantage.

Valiant, Chansi, and Viridian each roll above 10—they sleep undisturbed and, once awake, regain 1 expended 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*. In this state, your character is semi-conscious and only partially-aware of their surroundings.

While you are in a trance, you have disadvantage on all Perception rolls. You may, however, roll your sleeping checks as normal.

Wearing Armor

Armor—while great for defense—does not make for comfortable sleeping attire. If you choose to keep your armor on while you sleep, you must roll your sleeping check with disadvantage.

The Lookout

While the lookout is on active guard duty, they can still make a sleeping check—simply assume that they find some time to 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.

5 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: Uuuuh I wake everyone up of course—I'm not fighting this thing alone.
DM: You shake everyone awake in a hurry. After a tense minute, Clanda realizes what the sound is—it's just a northern barred owl calling out in the night, nothing more.
Clanda: Are you *kidding me*, Viridian.
Viridian: Uh... whoops. Sorry everyone, false alarm. We don't get many owls in the city, see.

Useful Magic Spells

Magic can be a great help when travelling, providing valuable light, heat, and supplies when needed most.

Below are some spells that may prove useful during your time in camp and some of their potential benefits:

◇ Alarm
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 (p132), 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 (p135), 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—also gain additional Stress-related effects.

◇ 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.

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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 in the wilds isn't safe, comfortable, or 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 pursuing 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. To make sure that he doesn't alert the local authorities, 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.

Maximum Hit Points & Hit Dice

Your lifestyle has a major impact on your 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—this is your primary focus for the days ahead. Choose one from the suggestions below, or discuss one with your GM.

- 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 & Socialize
- 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 a little, advance the agendas of some NPCs and factions, 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 GM:

- **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.

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Leveling Up

Your character gains experience by being an active force—making new discoveries, overcoming great obstacles, and changing 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

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 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 faithful 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 the world. But be clear when a mentor has level restrictions—characters should be able 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 Reponses* 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 p153
A collection of random tables.

B FAQ p155
Some frequently asked questions.

C Sheets & Trackers p158
Character sheets, trackers, and reference pages.

A

Random Tables

Proficiencies

Artisan's Tools

01-05	Alchemist's supplies
06-10	Brewer's supplies
11-15	Calligrapher's supplies
16-20	Carpenter's tools
21-25	Cartographer's tools
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
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

Favored 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

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 Snake
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 Snake
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

FAQ

This section lists some frequently asked questions regarding *Darker Dungeons*. If your question isn't answered here, do contact me.

A 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*.

B Why make this?

I enjoy D&D, but—like all GM'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.

C 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 bad 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.

D 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.

Usage Die

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

E 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 GM 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 GM'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 GM 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 *inaccurate* and actually makes the players far more likely to succeed in their attacks.

As an example, here we see Clanda as she attacks 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 GM dice.

F 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.

Online VTTs: If you're playing online, or using a virtual tabletop (such as Roll20, Fantasy Grounds, Foundry, etc), you may find it easier to stick with the pre-programmed initiative system.

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 GM can risk using 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.

G 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 GM 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.

H 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.

I 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 don't have any markdown for you to use in your own Homebrewery.

J 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.

K 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 (patreon.com/giffyglyph) to support this and my other projects.
- **Ko-fi:** My Ko-fi page (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.

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Thanks for reading this! If you have any questions or feedback, you can DM me at /u/giffyglyph or @giffyglyph, email me at giffyglyph@gmail.com, or follow my other assorted works at www.giffyglyph.com.

C

Sheets & Trackers

This chapter contains a variety of print-friendly character sheet templates, trackers, and reference pages to help you use this supplement in your D&D 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 compatible with other games and campaigns. Mix-and-match these sheets as best suits your own particular game.

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

STRENGTH

DEXTERITY

CONSTITUTION

INTELLIGENCE

WISDOM

CHARISMA

PROFICIENCY BONUS

SAVING THROWS

- ____ STR
- ____ DEX
- ____ CON
- ____ INT
- ____ WIS
- ____ CHA

SKILLS

- ____ Acrobatics
- ____ Animal Handling
- ____ Arcana
- ____ Athletics
- ____ Deception
- ____ History
- ____ Insight
- ____ Intimidation
- ____ Investigation
- ____ Medicine
- ____ Nature
- ____ Perception
- ____ Performance
- ____ Persuasion
- ____ Religion
- ____ Sleight of Hand
- ____ Stealth
- ____ Survival

PROFICIENCIES & LANGUAGES

Armor: Light Medium Heavy Shield

Weapons: Simple Martial

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

SENSES

ARMOR CLASS

RESISTANCES & IMMUNITIES

MAX HP

CURRENT TEMPORARY

HIT POINTS

TOTAL	USED	TOTAL	USED
____ d6	____	____ d10	____
____ d8	____	____ d12	____

HIT DICE

DEATH SAVE FAILURES

INITIATIVE

NORMAL OTHER

SPEED

EXPERIENCE

TRAINING

UNARMORED AC

FATE

INSPIRATION

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

SPELL SAVE DC

SPELL ATTACK BONUS

ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

ATTACK	TO HIT	DAMAGE & TYPE

FEATURES & TRAITS

LEVEL	FEATURE/TRAIT	DETAILS

APPEARANCE

MEMORIES

Age
Height
Weight
Distinguishing Feature
Motivation
Habit

DETAILS

PERSONAL QUEST

FAMILY

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

WATERSKIN

INVENTORY SLOTS

COPPER

SILVER

GOLD

EQUIPMENT

ITEM	BULK	QUANTITY	NOTCHES	ITEM	BULK	QUANTITY	NOTCHES

EXHAUSTION

	LEVEL	EFFECT
○	1	Disadvantage on ability checks
○	2	Speed halved
○	3	Disadvantage on attack rolls / saving throws
○	4	Hit point maximum halved
○	5	Speed reduced to 0
○	6	Death

STRESS

- ○ **20** Gain a new Affliction
- ○ **30** Gain a new Affliction
- ○ **35** Gain a new Affliction
- ○ **40** Hit your Breaking Point

BREAKING POINTS

AFFLICTIONS

	NAME	EFFECT
○	Fearful	Disadvantage: WIS checks/saves
○	Lethargic	+1 exhaustion until removed
○	Masochistic	Disadvantage: CON checks/saves
○	Irrational	Disadvantage: INT checks/saves
○	Paranoid	Speed is halved
○	Selfish	Disadvantage: CHA checks/saves
○	Panic	Disadvantage: DEX checks/saves
○	Hopelessness	Disadvantage: STR checks/saves
○	Mania	Disadvantage: attack rolls
○	Anxiety	Disadvantage: Stress checks
○	Hypochondria	Hit point maximum is halved
○	Narcissistic	Disadvantage: ability checks
○	Powerful	+2 to all damage rolls
○	Focused	+2 to all attack rolls
○	Stalwart	+2 AC
○	Acute	Advantage: INT checks/saves
○	Perceptive	Advantage: WIS checks/saves
○	Courageous	Advantage: CHA checks/saves

WOUNDS

DETAIL	TREATED
	○
	○
	○
	○
	○
	○

PERMANENT INJURIES

DETAIL	TREATED
	○
	○
	○
	○
	○
	○

SURVIVAL CONDITIONS

HUNGER	THIRST	FATIGUE	TEMPERATURE	EFFECT
○ Stuffed	○ Quenched	○ Energized	○ Perfect	○ -1 Exhaustion
○ Well-fed	○ Refreshed	○ Well-rested	○ Comfortable	
○ Ok	○ Ok	○ Ok	○ Ok	
○ Peckish	○ Parched	○ Tired	○ Noticeable	
○ Hungry	○ Thirsty	○ Sleepy	○ Uncomfortable	
○ Ravenous	○ Dry	○ Very sleepy	○ Overwhelming	○ +1 Exhaustion
○ Starving	○ Dehydrated	○ Barely awake	○ Unbearable	○ +1 Exhaustion

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○

Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○

Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○

Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○

Description

HOLDINGS

CONDITIONS

○ **BLINDED**
You can't see and automatically fail any ability check that requires sight. Attack rolls against you have advantage, and your Attack rolls have disadvantage.

○ **CHARMED**
You can't Attack the charmer or target the charmer with harmful Abilities or magical Effects. The charmer has advantage on any ability check to interact socially you.

○ **DEAFENED**
You can't hear and automatically fail any ability check that requires hearing.

○ **DYING**
You are incapacitated, can't move, and can speak only two words per round. You fall prone and drop whatever you're holding. You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity Saving Throws. Attack rolls against you have advantage. Any Attacks that hit you are criticals if the attacker is within 5 ft of you.

○ **FRIGHTENED**
You have disadvantage on Ability Checks and Attack rolls while the source of its fear is within your line of sight. You can't willingly move closer to the source of your fear.

○ **GRAPPLED**
Your speed becomes 0, and you can't benefit from any bonus to its speed. The condition ends if the Grappler is incapacitated. The condition also ends if an effect removes you from the reach of the Grappler or Grappling effect.

○ **INCAPACITATED**
You can't take Actions or reactions.

○ **INVISIBLE**
You are impossible to see without the aid of magic or a Special sense. For the purpose of Hiding, you are heavily obscured. Your location can be detected by any noise you make or any tracks you leave. Attack rolls against you have disadvantage, and your Attack rolls have advantage.

○ **PARALYZED**
You are incapacitated and can't move or speak. You automatically fails Strength and Dexterity Saving Throws. Attack rolls against you have advantage. Any Attack that hits you is a critical hit if the attacker is within 5 feet of you.

○ **PETRIFIED**
You are transformed, along with any nonmagical object you are wearing or carrying, into a solid inanimate substance. Your weight increases by a factor of ten, and you cease aging. You are incapacitated, can't move or speak, and are unaware of your surroundings. Attack rolls against you have advantage. You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity Saving Throws. You have Resistance to all damage. You are immune to poison and disease, although a poison or disease already in its system is suspended, not neutralized.

○ **POISONED**
You have disadvantage on Attack rolls and Ability Checks.

○ **PRONE**
Your only Movement option is to crawl, unless you stand up and thereby end the condition. You have disadvantage on Attack rolls. An Attack roll against you has advantage if the attacker is within 5 feet of you. Otherwise, the Attack roll has disadvantage.

○ **RESTRAINED**
Your speed becomes 0, and you can't benefit from any bonus to your speed. Attack rolls against you have advantage, and your Attack rolls have disadvantage. You have disadvantage on Dexterity Saving Throws.

○ **STUNNED**
You are incapacitated, can't move, and can speak only falteringly. You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity Saving Throws. Attack rolls against you have advantage.

○ **UNCONCIOUS**
You are incapacitated, can't move or speak, and are unaware of your surroundings. You drop whatever you're holding and fall prone. You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity Saving Throws. Attack rolls against you have advantage. Any Attack that hits you is a critical hit if the attacker is within 5 feet of you.

SPELLS & EFFECTS

SPELL	DETAIL

SPELLCASTING ABILITY	SPELL SAVE DC	SPELL ATTACK BONUS

MAGICAL BURNOUT

0 Cantrips

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

NAME	5	4	3	2	1
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○

ITEM CHARGES

NAME	20	12	10	8	6	4	1
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

USAGE & AMMUNITION DIE

RATIONS ○○○○○

WATERSKIN ○○○○○

INVENTORY SLOTS

COPPER

SILVER

GOLD

EQUIPMENT

ITEM	DETAILS	BULK	QUANTITY	NOTCHES

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

OTHER HOLDINGS

APPEARANCE

MEMORIES

Age
Height
Weight
Distinguishing Feature
Motivation
Habit

DETAILS

PERSONAL QUEST

FAMILY

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

WATERSKIN

INVENTORY SLOTS

COPPER

SILVER

GOLD

EQUIPMENT

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

NAME	5	4	3	2	1
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○

ITEM CHARGES

NAME	20	12	10	8	6	4	1
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

USAGE & AMMUNITION DIE

RATIONS ○○○○○

WATERSKIN ○○○○○

INVENTORY SLOTS

COPPER

SILVER

GOLD

EQUIPMENT

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

Name ○
Description

MAGIC ITEM

OTHER HOLDINGS

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

SPELLBOOK

LEVEL	SPELL	DETAILS	SCHOOL	CASTING	RANGE	COMPONENTS	DURATION	SOURCE

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

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

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		
	4-8		
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	12-16		
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	0-4		
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	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		

ADDITIONAL NOTES

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

Month:

DAY	EVENTS	XP & REWARDS

ADDITIONAL NOTES

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

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

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

TRIAL

DC

TOTAL REQUIRED

SUCCESSES

FAILURES

PACE

DEADLINE

GOAL

FAILURES	OUTCOME
0	**Major Victory:**
1-2	**Minor Victory:**
3-4	**Minor Defeat:**
5	**Major Defeat:**

TASK	SUCCESSES

TRIAL

DC

TOTAL REQUIRED

SUCCESSES

FAILURES

PACE

DEADLINE

GOAL

FAILURES	OUTCOME
0	**Major Victory:**
1-2	**Minor Victory:**
3-4	**Minor Defeat:**
5	**Major Defeat:**

TASK	SUCCESSES

Quick Reference

Low-light & Darkvision

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

When you calculate 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

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.

Animal Handling

- **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 & Bulk

You carry items in *slots*, with each item occupying 1 or more slots according to its *bulk*. Your capacity depends on your size, strength, and armor.

Inventory: Size

Size	Slots
Tiny	6 + STR
Small	14 + STR
Medium	18 + STR
Large	22 + [STR x 2]
Huge	30 + [STR x 4]
Gargantuan	46 + [STR x 8]

Encumberance

If you find yourself carrying more than your inventory capacity allows, you are encumbered. While you are encumbered, you gain the following condition:

- Your speed is halved.
- You have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution.

Basic Supplies

You can freely carry one ration box, one water-skin, and one coin purse. These don't occupy any of your inventory slots.

Armor Expertise

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

Size	Description	Bulk
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

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

Characters divide their total number of item slots into distinct containers that they name, categorize, and place about their person.

Container Categories

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Item Restoration

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

Ammunition

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

Skills are not tied to a single ability. You may add your skill bonus to any appropriate ability check.

Social Interaction

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

When you use the Help action, you roll one of the two d20 dice. Add your ally's modifiers as normal.

Tools

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

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

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

- **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

You gain experience points for three main activities: making discoveries, overcoming adversity, and recovering lost treasures.

Character Advancement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Time	Hunger	Thirst	Fatigue
Dawn	+1	+1	—
Noon	—	—	+1
Dusk	+1	+1	+1

Stamina Check

d6	Result
1-2	Gain +1 hunger
3-4	Gain +1 thirst
5-6	Gain +1 fatigue

Stress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. **Build your campsite:** Making camping checks to set up your camp. The more successes, the better the camp.
2. **Appoint a lookout:** This person is in charge of security and perception checks.
3. **Pick one primary activity:** If you're not on lookout, you can do one primary activity.
4. **Sleep:** Get some rest.
5. **Pack up:** Get your stuff together and move on.

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.

Long Rest

A long rest requires a full week of downtime in a sanctuary—village, town, or city. For each week:

1. **Sell loot:** Trade in treasure for GP and XP.
2. **Choose lifestyle:** Choose your quality of lifestyle for the week.
3. **Choose primary activity:** Choose one primary downtime activity and pay any relevant costs.
4. **Hear rumors:** While resting, your adventuring party learns of three rumors.
5. **Perform secondary activities:** You can do two small, secondary activities during your week.
6. **Settle up:** It's the end of the week—complete your primary activity and check your wounds.

Training

To level up, you must spend time training. You need three things: a mentor, facilities, and gold.

Training Costs

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

THANKS FOR READING
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