OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

RETRO ADVENTURE GAME

Adaptation Guidelines *v1.2*

Compatible Games

The old-school gaming scene is sitting on a secret: a huge number of games, despite having different brand names on their covers, are highly compatible! This cross-compatibility between many games means that a great wealth of adventures, campaign settings, and rules supplements can be used with *Old-School Essentials*.

The Basic/Expert Rules

Old-School Essentials is 100% compatible with the 1981 edition of the world's most popular fantasy RPG, commonly known as the Basic/Expert edition (B/X for short). Any material published for the Basic/Expert rules can be used directly with *Old-School Essentials*. Decades of adventure are at your fingertips!

Other Editions

Additionally, material published for all 20th century editions of the world's most popular fantasy RPG (for example, the classic Advanced edition from the 1970s) is also largely compatible with *Old-School Essentials*.

The rules of other editions do differ somewhat from the Basic/Expert rules, so some amount of adaptation work may be required in order to use these materials with *Old-School Essentials*. This is not recommended for beginning players, but for those who are familiar with the rules, such adaptation is not complicated.

Other Old-School Games

Over the last decade, a large number of old-school adventure games have been published, many of which—like *Old-School Essentials*—are also closely compatible with the Basic/Expert rules. Material published for any game that is compatible with the Basic/Expert rules is easy to use with *Old-School Essentials*.

Some of the most popular old-school games which are closely compatible with the Basic/Expert rules are *Basic Fantasy RPG* (by Chris Gonnerman), *Labyrinth Lord* (by Daniel Proctor), *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* (by James Edward Raggi IV), and *Swords & Wizardry* (by Matt Finch). This document provides notes on how these systems vary from the Basic/Expert rules.

When using material written for *Labyrinth Lord*, the following points of variance with the Basic/Expert rules are the most important to look out for.

ADVENTURES

Monster Reactions Table

The *Labyrinth Lord* monster reactions table is inverted, compared with the same table in B/X. (e.g. a roll of 2 indicates a very friendly reaction in *Labyrinth Lord*, but an immediately hostile reaction in B/X.)

Adapting: If an adventure mentions bonuses or penalties to reaction rolls, these should be reversed (so that a penalty becomes a bonus and vice versa).

Hoard Class

Labyrinth Lord uses an alternative system of treasure type codes.

Adapting: The equivalent B/X treasure types are shown in the table opposite.

High-Level NPCs

As human classes can advance to 20th level in *Labyrinth Lord*, adventures may refer to NPCs of above the usual maximum of 14th level.

Adapting: The easiest solution is to use the NPC as written, treating them as an unusual case. Alternatively, you may wish to scale the NPC down to a lower level, adjusting their abilities accordingly.

NPC Clerics

NPC clerics in *Labyrinth Lord* can cast spells at 1st level. (In B/X, clerics do not gain this ability until 2nd level.)

Adapting: The easiest solution is to use the NPC as written, treating them as an unusual case. Alternatively, you may wish to reduce the number of spells available to the character, referring to the standard clerical spell progression table.

NPC and Monster Armour

NPCs or monsters may be listed as wearing one of the following types of armour which are not available in B/X: banded mail, scale mail, splint mail, studded leather armour.

Adapting: Simply use the NPC or monster as written. If players get access to the armour or inquire about purchasing similar armour, you may wish to introduce it to the game.

NPC and Monster Weapons

NPCs or monsters may be listed as using one of the following types of weapons which are not available in B/X: heavy crossbow, dart, flail, heavy flail, light hammer, morningstar, heavy pick, light pick, scimitar, bastard sword, trident.

Adapting: Simply use the NPC or monster as written. If players get access to the weapon or inquire about purchasing similar weapons, you may wish to introduce it to the game.

High-Level Spells

Labyrinth Lord monsters or NPCs may have access to cleric spells of beyond 5th level or magic-user spells of beyond 6th level.

Adapting: If you have the *Labyrinth Lord* book which describes the spells in question, you may wish to use them directly. If the material is not available, you may either ignore the higher level spells or replace them with spells from the standard B/X spell lists.

Hoard Class to Treasure Type Conversion	
LL Hoard Class	B/X Treasure Type
I	P
II	Q
III	R
IV	S
V	T
VI	U
VII	V
VIII	O
IX	N
X	M
XI	L
XII	K
XIII	J
XIV	I
XV	H
XVI	G
XVII	F
XVIII	E
XIX	D
XX	C
XXI	B
XXII	A

New Classes

Maximum Level

Human classes can advance to 20th level in *Labyrinth Lord*. (In B/X, human classes max out at 14th level.)

Adapting: The simplest solution is to simply ignore the level advancement beyond 14th level. Alternatively, you might wish to move some of the abilities the class gains after 14th level down to lower levels.

New Spells

High-Level Spells

Labyrinth Lord adds extra spell levels beyond the B/X norms (cleric spells of 6th and 7th levels, and magic-user / elf spells of 7th, 8th, and 9th level).

Adapting: Two possible solutions:

▶ Introduce higher level spells as magic items. PCs may discover scrolls or other one-use magic items that reproduce the effects of a spell beyond 5th or 6th level.

▶ Extend the maximum level of character classes (e.g. using the guidelines in Classic Fantasy: Genre Rules) and extrapolate the spell progression tables to include higher level spells.

AC Conversions

One of the main points of variance between the different games mentioned above is the way they handle Armour Class. The following table gives a quick conversion guide.

Armour Class Conversion Table						
Armour Type	**B/X**	**OSE**	**BFRPG**	**LL**	**LotFP**	**S&W**
None	9	9 [10]	11	9	12	9 [10]
Shield only	8	8 [11]	12	8	13	8 [11]
Leather	7	7 [12]	13	7	14	7 [12]
Leather + shield	6	6 [13]	14	6	15	6 [13]
Chainmail	5	5 [14]	15	5	16	5 [14]
Chainmail + shield	4	4 [15]	16	4	17	4 [15]
Plate mail	3	3 [16]	17	3	18	3 [16]
Plate mail + shield	2	2 [17]	18	2	19	2 [17]
	1	1 [18]	19	1	20	1 [18]
	0	0 [19]	20	0	21	0 [19]
	-1	-1 [20]	21	-1	22	-1 [20]
	-2	-2 [21]	22	-2	23	-2 [21]
	-3	-3 [22]	23	-3	24	-3 [22]

B/X: Basic/Expert; **OSE:** Old-School Essentials; **BFRPG:** Basic Fantasy RPG;
LL: Labyrinth Lord; **LotFP:** Lamentations of the Flame Princess; **S&W:** Swords & Wizardry

Further Info

Links

For more information on the games mentioned:

Old-School Essentials: *necroticgnome. com*

Basic Fantasy RPG: *basicfantasy.org*

Labyrinth Lord: *goblinoidgames.com*

Lamentations of the Flame Princess: *lotfp.com*

Swords & Wizardry: *froggodgames.com*

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