The Orbuculum

December 2020

In This Issue...

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

Requires *Old-School Essentials* Core Rules.

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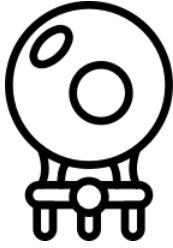
Welcome

What you have in front of you is an irregular publication filled with fan-created rulings, system tweaks, and discussions of play style for *Old School Essentials*. This first issue includes only my own creations. Future issues, if any, will rely on the contributions of others!

Orbuculum? Rolls right off the tongue, doesn't it?! An orbuclum is a crystal ball, a scrying stone. It seemed appropriate and distinctive enough to be memorable. Also, among the hallmarks of old school gaming was teaching lads and lasses words that had long been out of fashion, like brazier, sepulchre, main-gauche, and geas (a word I still don't know how to pronounce).

The minimalist presentation is also intentional. This is a resource not an adventure module. Also, I thought it might speed up production. (It didn't.)

Disclaimer

Material in *The Orbuculum* is neither "official" content for *Old School Essentials* (OSE), nor is it reviewed, vetted, or endorsed by the author, Gavin Norman. *The Orbuculum* contents may not have been playtested, especially in combination. So be careful out there! The best way to play OSE is rules-as-written, first. Changes are for when you find a hole to patch or a rough point, *in play*, that you want to smooth over.

Contributions

Do you have wise words to share about OSE play? Perhaps a well-tested trick from your own table or a methodology for populating a town? Thoughts on "domain play" or an analysis of a sub-system? Send your minimally formatted submissions to rayotus@gmail.com. Include "The Orbuculum Submission" in the subject line.

Credits

Huge thanks to JJ Lanza for his thoughtful feedback and contributions!

Shooting for Stats

Rolling character stats "3d6 down-the-line" and working with whatever you get can be really interesting. Sort of like reading tea leaves and then building a vision for a character's future. On the other hand, it can also feel like a missed opportunity for engaging with the game sooner. The following method both evens out the rolls and gives players some ability to shoot for a particular class.

For each stat, players first declare which one they are rolling. Then they roll 2d6 and add a fixed value from an array: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Once a number is used, it's gone. No retracing steps or changing one's mind after a stat is totaled.

Example

Jo wants to roll up a Thief and decides to roll DEX first. The dice come up 3 & 1. Seriously? A 4?! She adds a 4 to make it 8 and punts ... "c'mon Dwarf!"

Jo then declares she is rolling for CON. The dice say 4 & 2 (groan!). She adds the 2 for another 8 and tries again. (Plan C is a wizard and now her array consists of: 1, 3, 5, and 6.)

Next she declares and rolls for INT, with sweat on her brow. A 6 and 5 make 11. Bingo! She adds the 6 for a 17. Wizaaaaard!

She finishes out with STR: 3+3 = 6, +3 = 9. Then CHA: 4+3 = 7, +5 = 12. And finally WIS: 5+4 = 9, +1 = 10. Saving the 1 from the array for the last was risky! But she didn't care much about WIS anyway.

Notes

Remember that ability scores aren't as impactful in OSE as they are in many RPGs. There is nothing to stop a player from having a great time playing an illiterate, low-INT wizard. The only real punishment is missing out on an XP bonus and when/if ability checks are used.

Don't use this method in combination with the "swap two" abilities option from the core rules, as that takes away from the consequences of choices and rolls in the stats mini-game.

This method adds time to character generation and that isn't necessarily desirable. If the emphasis is on quickly getting a player into the game (or back into the game when their character dies), you may want to stick with or revert to 3d6 down-the-line, swap two (or not).

Expanded d6 Damage

OSE's default is that all weapons do d6 damage in the earliest tradition of fantasy RPGs, though I suspect the most common mode of play is to use the optional, variable damage.

The advantage to the d6 method is that characters can choose gear for the "cool factor" without fear of making suboptimal choices. When all weapons have the same damage potential, however, it begs the question why someone would choose to carry an unwieldy and slow two-handed sword over a light, fast, concealable dagger.

One answer is initiative. GM's are encouraged to let longer weapons to strike first, at least in the first round of combat. And some weapons, like spears, can be set against a charge for extra damage. But this usually isn't enough to justify a two-handed d6 spear over a d6 dagger and +1 AC shield combo. And certainly doesn't explain why anyone would fight with a weapon in each hand when characters only get one attack.

A great middle ground between variable and fixed (d6) damage is to adopt a scheme that isn't tied to equipment lists. One option is to introduce more variation by fighting style, but still only use d6s.

Two-Handed Weapons are slow (strike last) and do explosive damage. If you roll a natural 6 for damage, roll the die once more and add the result.

Dual wielders roll 2d6 and take the best result for damage. (This option of rolling twice and taking the best damage, also works well if the variable damage option is in play.)

Pole Weapons have reach; you get a pre-emptive attack when first engaged in melee if you set the weapon against a charge rather than moving. You can also attack from the second rank.

Weapon Restrictions

This method allows any class to use any weapon for flavor reasons. However, you may want to continue to restrict magic weapon use; magic weapons have no special abilities or bonuses (but are still magical) in the hands of a class that could not have used them rules-as-written. In the hands of a wizard, a +2, flaming magic sword could hurt a creature immune to mundane damage, but the rest of the magic is dormant. The weapon "wants" to be in a fighter's hands.

Skill Check Chatter

There are a couple of ways to do skill checks in OSE, but the first and most important option is ... *don't*. Despite what we have internalized from decades of skill-based RPGs, there are other ways to adjudicate character skill than die rolls.

Use Dialogue

Let the existing player-GM dialogue do the work. If players ask the right questions or describe the right actions, they get the info or pass the test without a roll. This is especially true if they act as a team or think through a situation carefully.

Set the Stakes

Indicate that a task will take a long time, draw unwanted attention, or use up valuable resources to complete, then let them decide if they still want to do it. Success comes at a cost! Offering meaningful choices makes for great sessions.

By Decree

Just say a thing happens or it doesn't (maybe can't). Not every task should require characters to prove themselves, especially if the results of failure aren't interesting or have no real cost. Just say "You do that," and move on. Conversely, the DM doesn't have to allow PCs to try anything and everything. Some tasks are clearly impossible.

In my own experience, fewer rolls are better when it comes to skill use. However, if you are set on using dice...

Roll Under or X-in-6

The OSE rules suggest two ways to make skill checks. The first is to roll d20 ≤ the most relevant ability. This works fine and is quick, but it doesn't feel very "old school" to me, even though there are accounts of GMs using this method going back to the 1970s. It puts a lot more emphasis on abilities than is typical for OSE.

The second is for the GM to "judge the likelihood of the action succeeding (e.g. expressed as a percentage or X-in-6 chance), tell the player the chances, and let them decide whether to take the risk or not" (See "Arbiter of Rules," *OSE Rules Tome*).

Percentages have a precedent in the thief skills table, but I prefer X-in-6, as it is the most ubiquitous non-d20 mechanic in OSE.

Move On!

Whatever you choose, stick with one method. Skill checks should happen quickly, so you can move on with the fiction. And once the roll happens, pass or fail, change the environment immediately to prevent players from skill-piling ("I try too" or "what if I help?").

X-in-6 Thieves

The percentile rolls for thief skills in OSE are an awkward fit.

I had to wonder what thief skills would look like as a table of X-in-6 chances. The following is a fairly straight conversion showing target numbers (d6 ≤ to succeed). The abbreviations match those in the *OSE* tome, but have been reordered from easiest to hardest.

A = Automatic, A5 = Automatic or ≤5 if the task is unusually difficult. Basically, anything over 83% converts to a 6-in-6 chance, so I took some liberties and set the line for A5 at 84%, and A at 97%.

LV	CS	HN	PP	MS	OL	TR	HS
1	A5	2	2	2	1	1	1
2	A5	2	2	2	2	1	1
3	A5	3	2	2	2	2	2
4	A5	3	3	2	2	2	2
5	A5	3	3	3	3	2	2
6	A5	3	3	3	3	3	3
7	A5	4	4	4	4	3	3
8	A5	4	4	4	4	4	4
9	A5	4	5	5	5	5	4
10	A5	4	A5	A5	A5	5	5
11	A	5	A5	A5	A5	A5	A5
12	A	5	A5	A5	A5	A5	A5
13	A	5	A	A	A	A	A5
14	A	5	A	A	A	A	A

I'm not sure this exercise brought much clarity for me. Why so many different patterns? And why is climbing sheer surfaces a piece of cake but hiding in shadows comparatively hard?

In response, I tried making a single, combined column to use for *all* thief skills.

Level	Target	Chance of Success
1-3	2	33%
4-6	3	50%
7-8	4	67%
9-10	5	83%
11-12	A5	83-100%
13-14	A	100%

Remember that thief skills are not ability-based; *no modifiers apply*.

This progression seems to work well, though players may prefer the variety of the original or the X-in-6 conversion.

I even considered taking this idea further. It *could* serve as a baseline for other classes or character concepts when it comes to skill uses not already defined. Environmental factors would move the target up or down 1 difficulty and unskilled means they either can't try it or it's 1-in-6. But this is just a codified way of saying the GM determines difficulty.
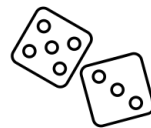
Milestone XP in Old School Essentials

Milestone XP is a tool sometimes used by GMs to sidestep the hassle of calculating XP the traditional way. The GM simply declares when it is time for all characters to level up, based on their adventures and the current state of the fiction. That is, characters advance in level when the GM believes they have earned it and when they are able to rest, train, and study.

I wanted to use milestone XP for OSE without losing the hallmark of different classes leveling up at different speeds.

To achieve the same effect, without counting XP, I first made a chart of all the level thresholds by class (see the following page), sorted by XP value. Then I highlighted values at regular intervals to use as the milestones. Note that the actual XP values then become irrelevant; all that each milestone indicates is which classes would have leveled up since the last milestone.

For example, a milestone at every 2k would produce the results in the following table (showing the first 5 milestones only). By 10k a party of every class would have a 5th level thief; 4th level Magic-User, Dwarf, Halfling, Fighter, and Cleric; and a 3rd level Elf.

Milestone	Class Advances
2,000 XP	Thief 2, Cleric 2, Fighter 2, Halfling 2
4,000 XP	Dwarf 2, Thief 3, Magic-User 2, Cleric 3, Elf 2, Fighter 3, Halfling 3
6,000 XP	Dwarf 3, Thief 4, Magic-User 3, Cleric 4
8,000 XP	Elf 3, Fighter 4, Halfling 4
10,000 XP	Dwarf 4, Thief 5, Magic-User 4

One could just as easily set a milestone at every 5 rows of the table for a slightly different result.

All that is left is to decide how to advance characters added in mid-campaign. One possibility is to introduce them at one level behind the lowest party member, find the corresponding milestone, and then just have them keep pace.

Combined Advancement

Class	Level	XP
Thief	2	1,200
Cleric	2	1,500
Fighter, Halfling	2	2,000
Dwarf	2	2,200
Thief	3	2,400
Magic-User	2	2,500
Cleric	3	3,000
Elf	2	4,000
Fighter, Halfing	3	4,000
Dwarf	3	4,400
Thief	4	4,800
Magic-User	3	5,000
Cleric	4	6,000
Elf	3	8,000
Fighter, Halfing	4	8,000
Dwarf	4	8,800
Thief	5	9,600
Magic-User	4	10,000
Cleric	5	12,000
Elf	4	16,000
Fighter, Halfing	5	16,000
Dwarf	5	17,000
Magic-User	5	20,000
Thief	6	20,000
Cleric	6	25,000
Elf	5	32,000
Fighter, Halfing	6	32,000
Dwarf	6	35,000
Magic-User	6	40,000
Thief	7	40,000
Cleric	7	50,000
Elf	6	64,000
Fighter, Halfing	7	64,000
Dwarf	7	70,000
Magic-User	7	80,000
Thief	8	80,000
Cleric	8	100,000
Elf	7	120,000
Fighter, Halfing	8	120,000
Dwarf	8	140,000
Magic-User	8	150,000
Thief	9	160,000
Cleric	9	200,000
Fighter	9	240,000
Elf	8	250,000
Dwarf	9	270,000
Thief	10	280,000
Cleric	10	300,000
Magic-User	9	300,000
Fighter	10	360,000
Cleric	11	400,000
Dwarf	10	400,000
Elf	9	400,000
Thief	11	400,000
Magic-User	10	450,000
Fighter	11	480,000
Cleric	12	500,000
Thief	12	520,000
Dwarf	11	530,000
Cleric	13	600,000
Elf	10	600,000
Fighter	12	600,000
Magic-User	11	600,000
Thief	13	640,000
Dwarf	12	660,000
Cleric	14	700,000
Fighter	13	720,000
Magic-User	12	750,000
Thief	14	760,000
Fighter	14	840,000
Magic-User	13	900,000
Magic-User	14	1,050,000

Side Initiative Bonuses

When using the individual initiative option in OSE, the Halfling gets a +1 bonus and DEX ability modifiers apply. When using the default, side initiative, however, these bonuses are usually set aside. The following are some alternative methods for working bonuses back into the game, while keeping the simplicity of side initiative.

One Bonus Applies

The surviving, conscious PC with the highest bonus rolls initiative for the party.

Halfling Luck

Forget DEX bonuses, but still allow a PC Halfling to add a +1 (luck) bonus to the side initiative. I usually let the halfling roll it to remind everyone of that character's importance and where the bonus originates.

No, you can't create a party of halflings to overload your luck; the bonus is non-stacking. On the other hand, "spares" are good.

It's up to the GM whether halfling retainers count. I find it amusing if they do. Retainers are often used like fodder, even if you enforce loyalty rolls at appropriate times. By comparison, a party will treat a lucky halfling like a prized resource.

Initiative Chips

Each player with a positive initiative bonus gets that many chips at the start of each session. They can spend a chip to get +1 to the initiative roll (no matter who rolls it). More than one chip can be spent at a time. Any/all chips must be spent *before* initiative rolls unless the GM allows otherwise.

The Benefits of Side Initiative

GMs are often quick to ditch side initiative, partly because players of more modern RPGs than OSE are used to individual initiative. However, there are some real benefits to side initiative.

Focus on Team Play

Side initiative creates a focus on team play. Players take their turns, by phase, in a simultaneous fashion, moving, then shooting, casting, or swinging (in that order). Getting the most out of the sequence may require real teamwork and strategy. By comparison, individual initiative requires players to "hold" their actions to get the same results.

Shifting Momentum

Because side initiative is faster and easier for the GM to track, the group is more likely to reroll initiative each round. And re-rolling initiative each round gives combat a dynamic ebb and flow!

Most GMs who use individual initiative fall into the "set it and forget it" mode, which ironically begins to look like static side initiative if the monsters all go on one initiative number. Imagine players A, B, C, and D roll for initiative, and the GM rolls once for the enemy, X. The order of turns might come out to be something like A, B, X, C, D. However, as soon as the monsters go, it effectively becomes C, D, A, B, X (heroes then monsters).

Player Engagement

Side initiative keeps players engaged. This assertion may seem like a stretch, but individual initiative often means ditching the prescribed combat (move, missile, magic, melee) sequence. Modern play has taught players to do everything their character is going to do on their turn and then sit back while other player characters act. This may lead to bad habits, like checking phones or looking at character sheets and planning for the next round instead of giving other players and the fiction the attention they deserve. This can happen when using side initiative too, though it is less likely, and it is one reason I still like to enforce the combat sequence rather than allowing each player to both move and attack on their turn.
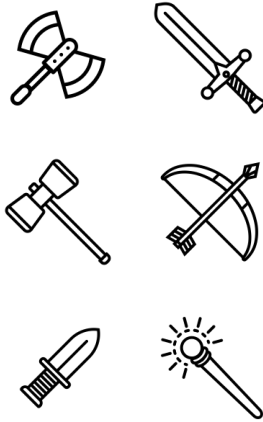
Tweaking the Combat Sequence

OSE combat follows a set sequence of phases, by initiative. Setting aside the optional roll for monster morale, the sequence is Winning side: *movement, missile, magic (spell casting),* and *melee.* And then the same for other sides. This can lead to some missed opportunities or awkwardness, the most notable being preemptive missile fire, setting a pole-arm against a charge, and determining what "goes last" means for slow weapons.

I've toyed around with a number of different methods, such as having each side go by initiative in each phase (instead of covering all the phases for one side at a time). But the easiest method may be to just note some exceptions and how they work. I like the word "reaction" (notably used by 5e) to describe the timing of certain actions in response to a trigger. Certainly all of the following ideas could simply be negotiated between player and GM at the table, taking into account the current fiction. However, there is some value in writing it out.

Reactions

When a character is appropriately prepared and a defined trigger occurs, a character may immediately take their turn to do a quick and/or limited action. This replaces their normal turn in that round, so a character can't react if they have already acted and they can't take a turn in the same round after using a reaction. The limitation applied for taking your action early/out of sequence is mostly likely that you can't move and take the reaction action.

Point-Blank Fire

When you have a readied missile weapon, are unengaged, and an opponent charges you, you may immediately fire your weapon at that opponent. Indicate the point in the opponent's move you target,

then roll to hit and, if successful for damage. If the opponent survives they then resume their turn. You may not move.

Brace for Impact

When you are holding a pole-arm, are unengaged, and an opponent without a similarly long weapon charges you, you may strike in melee as soon as they reach your forward space. Roll to hit and damage before your opponent's melee phase. You may not move.

Note that Brace for Impact does a little to remove the sting of the slow weapon tag on pole-arms. But it only works in the specific circumstances indicated.

First Blood

When you have a readied non-slow melee weapon and an opponent attacks you with a slow weapon, you may strike first in melee. Roll to hit and damage before your opponent's melee phase. You may not move.

This may be a funny way of saying slow weapons go last. It essentially puts the onus on the defender who lost initiative to interrupt the attack of the slow weapon wielder. The "you may not move" clause is key here; otherwise it would conflict with Brace for Impact. IOW, if you are charging someone with a spear, you can't call first blood since you moved into the

range of their larger (if slower) weapon.

More Reactions

The great thing about structuring reactions as a universal mechanic is that it could be expanded for some new game elements. Here are a few examples.

Counterspell

When you see an opponent casting a spell, and are unengaged, you may simultaneously cast Counterspell, if you have it memorized. (This spell isn't in OSE, but let's pretend it is at level 2.) Make an ability check vs. your INT. If your result is a success *and* equal to or higher than the level of the spell they cast, you have interrupted their spell. You both lose the relevant spells as cast. You may not move.

Moregard (INT = 16) sees his nemesis Kokrum casting a spell. He immediately moves to counter it. Rolling a 4, the Counterspell is successfully cast. However, Kokrum was casting Cloudkill, a 5th level spell. So it goes off anyway, filling the room with a poisonous fog!

Stand Guard

When you are using a shield, are unengaged, and an opponent charges someone or something next to you, you may move up to 10' to block the opponent, intercepting their attack. You are now engaged with that opponent. You may not attack this turn.

Oops, I Spilled

When you have an item in hand, are unengaged, and an opponent charges you, you may drop it into the space in front of you just before they occupy it. (They can't change course.) You may not move. If your item isn't in hand, but is within reach, you may make an ability check against DEX to get it.

Sminky the halfling is about to get mowed over by a minotaur. Luckily he has a bag of caltrops hanging from his belt. He easily makes his DEX 15 check (rolling an 11) and spills the caltrops in front of him. The minotaur stomps in and lets out an ear-splitting bellow! He takes d4 damage from the caltrops.

Note that this reaction presents some interesting possibilities for oil, grease, marbles, or other substances.

Monster Maker

The list of monsters in *OSE* is certainly not exhaustive. When you need to make something new, the examples, listed as they are in alphabetical order, don't really help you understand how they were built or the scales used.

The easiest way to make up a new creature is probably to find a reference point and add bits from other monsters.

Let's try one.

I want a flying tiger. Obviously I start with the entry for Cat, Great: Tiger. The key difference is the flying movement. I have lots of options when looking for a creature with a flying speed, so I go for something of a similar size and weight, like a Griffon or Pegasus. After adding the flying speed, I decide to make the AC and HD of my creature a step weaker to represent the lighter body it probably has as a flyer. It seems a little boring, so I want it to breathe fire! The Hellhound's ability seems appropriate. Finally, I recalculate the XP for having added two special abilities.

It totally works, but there's another way to do it as well. If you can develop a good understanding of the relative (min/max) values for each major characteristic (e.g. AC, HD, Morale, etc.), you can build the creature you want from scratch.

Did you know that a sprite and a cave bear both have an AC of 5? Clearly that value is relative. The sprite is hard to hit because of its size and speed whereas the bear has thick fur and tough skin.

The following pages attempt to profile the major elements of creature stat blocks, showing the range of values for each with descriptors and/or representative monsters. If you take a little time to study them, you will find that building creatures becomes second nature.

Be sure to consider the "why" of oddities; like the fact that oozes and vampires have the same morale (11). Also accept that some particulars just won't make sense! It is, after all, a fantasy setting.

Once you get a handle on the ranges and examples, try building some of your own monsters. For a challenge, find a cool picture of an unusual creature from a video game, movie, cartoon, or book and do your best to recreate it for OSE.

Armor Class

Range: 9 to -2. Lower is better.

Factors like quickness and mass affect AC as well a creature's hide. In some cases a default armor may be implied by the creature type (e.g. Halfling Leather, Elf

Chainmail.) Creatures better than/below 1 typically have some magical nature that enhances their defense.

Defenseless: (hit automatically when attacked) *Green Slime, Yellow Mould*

AC 9 [10] No Armor: *Giant Centipede, Medium, Normal Human, Rat*

AC 8 [11] Shield: *Gelatinous Cube, Grey Ooze, Hawk, Medusa, Neanderthal, Ochre Jelly, Zombie*

AC 7 [12] Leather: *Berserker, Boar, Camel, Carcass Crawler, Draft Horse, Giant Bass, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Leech, Giant Octopus, Giant Rat, Giant Rockfish, Giant Squid, Giant Toad, Giant Weasel, Halfling, Harpy, Horse, Killer Bee, Kobold, Herd Animal (all), Insect Swarm (all), Mule, Narwhal, Nixie, Pterodactyl, Shadow, Shrieker, Skeleton, Spitting Cobra, Stirge, War Horse, Wererat, Wild Horse, Wolf, Wood Golem*

AC 6 [13] Leather & Shield: *Amber Golem, Bandit, Bat, Black Bear, Black Pudding, Brigand, Caecilia, Cockatrice, Dire Wolf, Freshwater Termite, Ghoul, Giant Bat, Giant Black Widow, Giant Hawk, Giant Piranha, Giant Vampire Bat, Goblin, Grizzly Bear, Hobgoblin, Killer Whale, Lion, Merman, Minotaur, Mountain Lion, Orc, Pegasus, Pit Viper, Polar Bear, Pteranodon, Purple Worm, Robber Fly, Rock Baboon, Rock Python, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Sea Snake, Sperm Whale, Thoul, Tiger, Trader, White Ape*

AC 5 [14] Chainmail: *Blink Dog, Bugbear, Cave Bear, Centaur, Crocodile, Cyclops, Djinni, Doppelgänger, Dryad, Elephant, Elf, Gargoyle, Giant Draco, Giant Ferret, Giant Gecko, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Tarantella, Gnoll, Gnome, Griffon, Hippogriff, Hydra (all), Lizard Man, Merchant, Ogre, Owlbear, Rhagodessa, Rhinoceros, Saltwater Termite, Sea Serpent, Sprite, Titanothere, Troglodyte, Werewolf, Wight*

AC 4 [15] Chain & Shield: *Basilisk, Bull Shark, Cave Locust, Chimera, Cloud Giant, Dwarf, Fire Beetle, Fire Giant, Frost Giant, Giant Catfish, Giant Shrew, Giant Tuatara, Great White Shark, Hellhound (all), Hill Giant, Living Crystal Statue, Living Rock Statue, Mako Shark, Oil Beetle, Panther, Small Roc, Stone Giant, Swamp Termite, Troll, Warp Beast, Wereboar, Wooly Rhinoceros*

AC 3 [16] Plate Mail: *Devil Swine, Driver Ant, Efreeti, Frost Salamander, Invisible Stalker, Large Crocodile, Mastodon, Mummy, Pixie, Stegosaurus, Tiger Beetle, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Weretiger, White Dragon, Wraith, Wyvern*

AC 2 [17] Plate & Shield: *Acolyte, Black Dragon, Bone Golem, Flame Salamander, Giant Crab, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Scorpion, Gorgon, Large Roc, Living Iron Statue, Noble, Rust Monster, Small Elemental (all types), Spectre, Storm Giant, Treant, Triceratops, Unicorn, Vampire (all), Veteran (all), Werebear*

AC 1 [18]: *Giant Crocodile, Green Dragon, Sea Dragon*

AC 0 [19]: *Blue Dragon, Bronze Golem, Giant Roc, Giant Sturgeon, Medium Elemental (all types)*

AC -1 [20]: *Red Dragon*

AC -2 [21]: *Dragon Turtle, Gold Dragon, Large Elemental (all types)*

Hit Dice

Range: 1 hp to 36 HD, the vast majority between 1 (bandit) and 8 (treant). Note that humanoids go from slightly less than 1 HD to about 3 HD (bugbears and tough veterans). The full range is representative of the natural world, from bat to sperm whale, as much as it is of the magical one, sprite to giant roc.

Size bands might be something like:

Tiny: 1 to 4 hp
Small: 1-1 to 1 HD
Normal: 1 to 2 HD
Large: 3 to 6 HD
Huge: 7 to 36

However, scale gets really wonky in the high hit die ranges. Vampires go all the way to 9 HD, but dragons start at 6 HD. Which goes to show you that toughness and size are sometimes parallel, but definitely aren't the same thing.

< 1 HD: *Bat, Giant Centipede, Giant Rat, Hawk, Killer Bee, Kobold, Normal Human, Sprite*

1 HD (e.g. 1-1, 1+n, 1*): *Acolyte, Bandit, Berserker, Brigand, Buccaneer, Dervish, Dwarf, Elf, Fire Beetle, Giant Ferret, Giant Shrew, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, Hobgoblin, Medium, Merchant, Merman, Nixie, Nomad, Orc, Pirate, Pixie, Pterodactyl, Rat,*

Skeleton, Spitting Cobra, Stirge, Swamp Termite, Tiny Herd Animal, Trader, Veteran (L1)

2 HD: *Bull Shark, Camel, Cave Locust, Crocodile, Dryad, Freshwater Termite, Ghoul, Giant Bass, Giant Bat, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Toad, Giant Vampire Bat, Gnoll, Green Slime, Horse, Lizard Man, Mule, Neanderthal, Oil Beetle, Pegasus, Pit Viper, Robber Fly, Rock Baboon, Shadow, Small Herd Animal, Small Insect Swarm, Troglodyte, Veteran (L2), Wild Horse, Wolf, Wood Golem, Yellow Mould, Zombie*

3 HD: *Boar, Bugbear, Carcass Crawler, Draft Horse, Giant Black Widow, Giant Crab, Giant Gecko, Giant Hawk, Giant Piranha, Grey Ooze, Harpy, Hellhound (3 HD), Hippogriff, Living Crystal Statue, Medium Herd Animal, Medium Insect Swarm, Mountain Lion, Noble, Sea Snake, Shrieker, Thoul, Tiger Beetle, Veteran (L3), War Horse, Wererat, Wight*

4 HD: *Black Bear, Blink Dog, Centaur, Dire Wolf, Doppelgänger, Driver Ant, Gargoyle, Gelatinous Cube, Giant Draco, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Scorpion, Giant Tarantella, Giant Weasel, Hellhound (4 HD), Large Herd Animal, Large Insect Swarm, Living Iron Statue, Mako Shark, Medusa, Ogre, Panther,*

Rhagodessa, Saltwater Termite, Unicorn, Wereboar, Werewolf, White Ape, Wraith

5 HD: *Cockatrice, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Rockfish, Grizzly Bear, Hellhound (5 HD), Hydra (5 heads), Lion, Living Rock Statue, Mummy, Ochre Jelly, Owlbear, Pteranodon, Rock Python, Rust Monster, Weretiger*

6 HD: *Basilisk, Caecilia, Giant Leech, Giant Squid, Giant Tuatara, Hellhound (6 HD), Hydra (6 heads), Killer Whale, Large Crocodile, Minotaur, Polar Bear, Rhinoceros, Sea Serpent, Small Roc, Spectre, Tiger, Troll, Warp Beast, Werebear, White Dragon*

7 HD: *Black Dragon, Cave Bear, Djinni, Griffon, Hellhound (7 HD), Hydra (7 heads), Vampire (7 HD), Wyvern*

8 HD: *Bone Golem, Flame Salamander, Giant Catfish, Giant Octopus, Gorgon, Great White Shark, Green Dragon, Hill Giant, Hydra (8 heads), Invisible Stalker, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Sea Dragon, Small Elemental (all types), Treant, Vampire (8 HD), Wooly Rhinoceros*

9 HD: *Blue Dragon, Chimera, Devil Swine, Elephant, Hydra (9 heads), Stone Giant, Vampire (9HD)*

10 HD: *Amber Golem, Black Pudding, Efreeti, Frost Giant, Giant Sturgeon, Hydra (10 heads), Red Dragon*

11 HD: *Fire Giant, Gold Dragon, Hydra (11 heads), Stegosaurus, Triceratops*

12 HD: *Cloud Giant, Frost Salamander, Hydra (12 heads), Large Roc, Medium Elemental (all types), Narwhal, Titanothere*

13 HD: *Cyclops.*

15 HD: *Giant Crocodile, Mastodon, Purple Worm, Storm Giant*

16 HD: *Large Elementals (all types)*

20 HD: *Bronze Golem, Tyrannosaurus Rex*

30 HD: *Dragon Turtle*

36 HD: *Giant Roc, Sperm Whale*

Attacks

Choosing the quantity, type, and quality of a creature's attacks can be more art than a science. There are a *lot* of factors in play, such as number appearing, how many targets a creature can damage in a round, effects tacked on to damage like paralysis, and so on. A magical formula for "challenge rating" would have to take all of these things into account.

However, there are some clear observable guidelines. For instance, humanoid monsters that carry weapons and do 1d10 or higher damage are much larger than a normal human. The following ranges mostly break down damage by type. But first it's worth talking about the particular language of attacks, as codified into the stat blocks.

Reading Monster Attacks

In OSE, when a monster has more than one listed attack, the attacks are separated by either an "or" or a comma. E.g. a panther is "2 x claw (1d4), 1 x bite (2d8)" and a white ape is "2 x claw (1d4) or 1 x thrown rock (1d6)." The comma should be read as an "and." Therefore, the panther gets 3 total attacks on its turn (2 claw and 1 bite) while the white ape either gets 2 claw attacks *or* 1 thrown rock attack.

Sometimes a monster has a combination of and/or attacks. For instance, e.g. a gold dragon's "2 x claw (2d4) and 1 x bite (6d6) or breath."

Splitting Attacks

There is no real indication as to whether a monster with multiple attacks can attack multiple targets or just one. The Bone Golem entry specifically states that it can divide its attacks, but that is the only inference in the *OSE Rules*

Tome that other creatures with multiple attacks can't.

A quick online poll suggests that most GMs allow creatures with multiple attacks to direct them at different targets within reach of their weapons (natural or otherwise). The creature's presumed intelligence plays a role, as well. Dumb creatures may attack at random while smart ones attack the biggest threat(s) first.

Common Sense Rules

The text assumes/relies on the GM's common sense (and rightly so). Most things are obvious or can be resolved with a short group discussion and consensus. The GM gets final say, but if it seems contentious, have all sides state their case as to why a creature might split its attacks or who it would attack, then "dice for it" to see which side is correct, assuming any one of them could have been correct (or may be correct next time).

Assessing Lethality

To get a real estimate of a creature's impact on an adventuring party takes some work, and changes a lot from creature to creature. There is no single magic formula that will produce a "challenge rating."

For instance, take the common rat. They appear in great numbers:

2d10 in their lair and 5d10 running around. Characters in a sewer, then, would encounter an average of 27.5 rats.

These break down into packs of 5-10 each, call it 4 packs of 7 rats. Each pack has 7 hp and one attack for d6 damage, plus a 5% chance of causing disease, at THAC0 19.

Assuming an average AC of around 6 for a first level party, each rat pack would hit on a 14 or better (35% of the time) for an average 3.5 hp of damage. To make the math easier, let's round down to 33%, or once every three rounds, making the expected damage per round 1.2 hp and a 1.7% chance of infection. Not terribly scary, though the infection is no joke; it causes death in d6 days or a month of on-your-ass sickness.

At 7 hp per swarm, you could expect the combat to go something like three rounds, between misses and not doing enough damage to kill a swarm outright. That raises the damage and chance of infection back up to 3.5 hp and 5% respectively, per character attacked.

Going to the other end of the spectrum, consider a Red Dragon. It has a claw, claw, bite attack that does an average 48 damage against one target or 4.5 to two targets (claws) and 18 to a third (bite).

You should be so lucky! When it breathes fire, the damage matches its hit points. In round one that's an average 48 damage to *everyone* in a 90' cone who misses their save (and 24 to everyone who makes it). It could of course be as high as 80/40 damage for a dragon with perfect hit points. Since it can breath fire up to three times a day, you could expect it to do this kind of awesome damage more than once in a combat that goes on a few rounds.

Despite all of this complexity, especially if you mix up more than one type of creature in a fight, a look at the encounter tables tells us that a creature's HD matches or slightly exceeds the level of the dungeon on which it might be found, which is in itself a kind of threat indicator.

Monsters With Weapons

Range: 1d4 to 8d6, with a practical limit for non-giant humanoids around 2d4. Whether such weapons are melee or ranged is generally not specified. We can assume they arm themselves with ranged weapons when it makes sense for their intelligence, terrain, tactics, etc. Small, pack creatures (see Number Appearing) are probably more likely to use harrying tactics that involve missiles.
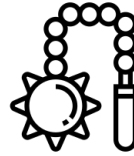
Carried Weapons

1d4: *Kobold, Medium, Nixie, Pixie*

1d6: *Acolyte, Bandit, Bone Golem, Brigand, Buccaneer, Centaur, Dervish, Devil Swine, Gnome, Goblin, Halfing, Harpy, Merchant, Lizard Man, Merman, Minotaur, Nomad, Normal Human, Orc, Pirate, Rock Baboon, Skeleton, Thoul, Trader, Wererat*

1d8: *Berserker, Dwarf, Elf, Hobgoblin, Noble, Veteran, Zombie*

2d4: *Bugbear, Gnoll, Neanderthal*

1d10: *Ogre*

2d8: *Hill Giant*

3d6: *Stone Giant*

4d6: *Frost Giant*

3d10: *Cyclops*

5d6: *Fire Giant*

6d6: *Cloud Giant*

8d6: *Storm Giant*

Thrown Rocks

Aside from all the normal ranged weapons and natural or magical ranged weapons (e.g. poison spit, fire breath), White apes throw rocks for 1d6 damage and Giants throw boulders for 3d6 damage.

Natural Weapons

Natural weapons (sometimes of a magical nature) vary by creature size and ferocity. Here they are listed by type and increasing damage (ignoring any damage from effects like blood-sucking and poison).

I considered separating Natural from Unnatural (magical) as categories, but where does one end and the other start in a fantasy world. Is the Carcass Crawler's paralyzing tentacles a kind of chemical thing or a magical one. The magma jets of a living rock statue might be an entirely natural geothermal upwelling inside of an entirely magical creature. So I mixed them all together. Pay attention to things like Bite and Touch attacks, they often do relatively light physical damage if the real blow is an effect like poison and energy drain.

Poison (16 creatures have it) is delivered all kinds of ways: bite, sting, breath (as gas), choking spores, claws, touch/tentacles, and even by gaze! Paralysis (6 creatures) seems to be delivered in melee only: bite, claw, and touch or tentacles. Petrification (3 creatures) can be either a melee or ranged attack: bite, breath, or gaze. Charm (3 creatures) is by gaze, song, or spell. Energy drain (7 creatures) has long been the bane of experienced characters and is usually a touch/melee attack. Elemental damage (e.g. fire, heat, cold, lightning) is common among the obvious types: frost salamander, hellhound, water elemental, etc., and is delivered via breath, spray, aura, or spell (storm giant's lightning bolt).

It's hard to account for the impact of effects. Something like fire can be quantified, but paralysis leaves a victim helpless, and yet might be deadlier.

Aura

1d8: *Flame Salamander (cold), Frost Salamander (heat)*

Bite (also Beak)

0 hp: *Giant Centipede (poison)*

1 hp: *Camel, Sea Snake (poison)*

1d2: *Cave Locust, Hawk*

1d3: *Ghoul (paralysis), Giant Rat (disease), Mule, Pterodactyl, Rock Baboon, Spitting Cobra (poison), Stirge, Swamp Termite*

1d4: *Freshwater Termite, Giant Bat, Giant Rattlesnake (poison), Giant Toad (1d4+1), Giant Vampire Bat (unconsciousness), Pit Viper (poison), Rock Python (constriction), Troglodyte*

1d6: *Black Bear, Blink Dog, Cockatrice (petrification), Gargoyle, Giant Bass, Giant Hawk, Giant Leech (blood drain), Giant Shrew, Hellhound (all sizes), Medusa (snake hair, poison), Minotaur, Mountain Lion, Oil Beetle, Rat (per pack, disease), Saltwater Termite, Wolf*

1d8: *Caecilia, Crocodile, Flame Salamander, Giant Crab Spider (poison), Giant Ferret, Giant Gecko, Giant Piranha, Giant Tarantella (poison), Grizzly Bear, Narwhal, Owlbear, Robber Fly*

2d4: *Bull Shark, Chimera, Dire Wolf, Fire Beetle, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Weasel (blood sucking), Werewolf*

1d10: *Basilisk (petrification), Giant Draco, Giant Squid (or 2 hull damage), Hippogriff, Hydra (any number of heads, per head!), Lion, Polar Bear, Troll*

1d12: *Doppelgänger, Pteranodon*

2d6: *Cave Bear, Driver Ant, Frost Salamander, Giant Black Widow (poison), Giant Tuatara, Mako Shark, Sea Serpent, Small Roc, Tiger, Tiger Beetle, Weretiger*

2d8: *Giant Catfish, Griffon, Large Crocodile, Panther, Purple Worm, Rhagodessa, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Werebear, White Dragon, Wyvern*

1d20: *Killer Whale*

2d10: *Amber Golem, Black Dragon, Giant Sturgeon, Great White Shark, Large Roc*

3d8: *Giant Crocodile, Green Dragon, Sea Dragon*

3d10: *Blue Dragon*

4d8: *Red Dragon*

6d6: *Gold Dragon, Tyrannosaurus Rex*

8d6: *Giant Roc*

3d20: *Sperm Whale*

Blow (also Fist)

1d8: *Small Elemental (all types), Wood Golem*

1d6 (2 attacks): *Living Crystal Statue, Living Iron Statue*

2d8: *Djinni, Efreeti, Medium Elemental (all types)*

4d4: *Invisible Stalker*

3d8: *Large Elemental (all types)*

2d6 (2 attacks): *Treant*

3d10: *Bronze Golem (3d10 + 1d10 heat!)*

Breath

Dragon breath weapon damage is by the dragon's hp. Damage listed uses the average size of each dragon.

0 hp: *Gorgon (petrification)*

3d6: *Chimera, Hellhound (3 HD)*

4d6: *Hellhound (4 HD)*

5d6: *Hellhound (5 HD)*

6d6: *Hellhound (6 HD)*

27 avg.: *White Dragon (cold, cone)*

7d6: *Hellhound (7 HD)*

36 avg.: *Green Dragon (poison, cloud), Sea Dragon (poison, jet)*

40 avg.: *Blue Dragon (lightning, line)*

45 avg.: *Red Dragon (fire, cone)*

49 avg.: *Gold Dragon (poison, cone)*

Claw (also Pincer, Talons)

There are some crazy combos here so while these may not look like they are "in order," I assure you that the average damage increases with each step. Creatures with two (or more) attacks are really strong as they are able to combine or spread out their damage as it makes sense. Not only does 2 x d3 claws do a slightly higher average damage than 1 x 1d6 claw, it's just better in every way! When facing two Giant Rats or Killer Bees, a Black Bear might take them both out.

1d2: *Hawk*

1d6: *Giant Hawk*

1d3 (2 attacks): *Black Bear, Chimera, Gargoyle, Ghoul (paralysis), Thoul (paralysis)*

1d4 (2 attacks): *Flame Salamander, Giant Tuatara, Griffon, Grizzly Bear, Harpy, Mountain Lion, Panther, Troglodyte, White Ape, White Dragon*

1d4+1 (2 attacks): *Black Dragon, Small Roc, Lion*

1d6 (**2 attacks**): *Green Dragon, Hippogriff, Polar Bear, Tiger, Troll, Weretiger*

1d6+1 (**2 attacks**): *Blue Dragon*

1d8 (**2 attacks**): *Cave Bear, Dragon Turtle, Large Roc, Owlbear, Red Dragon, Sabre-Toothed Tiger*

2d4 (**2 attacks**): *Gold Dragon, Werebear*

1d10 (**2 attacks**): *Giant Scorpion*

2d6 (**2 attacks**): *Amber Golem, Giant Crab*

1d6 (**4 attacks**): *Frost Salamander*

3d6 (**2 attacks**): *Giant Roc*

Horn (also Gore, Tusk)

1d4: *Gargoyle*

1d6: *Minotaur, Giant Horned Chameleon*

1d8: *Unicorn*

2d4: *Chimera, Boar, Elephant, Rhinoceros*

2d6: *Narwhal, Gorgon, Devil Swine, Wereboar, Mastodon, Wooly Rhinoceros*

2d8: *Stegosaurus (tail/spikes)*

3d6: *Triceratops*

Gaze

0 hp: *Basilisk (petrification), Medusa (petrification), Vampire (charm)*

Kick (also Hoof)

1d4: *Mule, Camel*

1d4 (**2 attacks**): *Riding Horse, Wild Horse*

1d6 (**2 attacks**): *Centaur, Pegasus, War horse*

1d8 (**2 attacks**): *Unicorn*

Magic (also Song, Spell, Charm)

Variable: *Devil Swine, Djinni, Dryad, Efreeti, Harpy, Medium, Sprite, Storm Giant (lightning bolt)*

Ram (also Butt)

0 hp: *Giant Horned Chameleon (tail/knock down), Bull Shark (stun)*

1d4: *Small or Tiny Herd Animal, Cave Locust (jump)*

1d6: *Medium Herd Animal*

1d8: *Large Herd Animal*

2d6: *Titanothere*

6d6: *Sperm Whale (hull damage)*

Sting

1d3: Killer Bee (poison, lodged stinger)

1d4: *Giant Scorpion (poison)*

1d6: *Wyvern (poison)*

1d8: *Purple Worm (poison)*

1d4 (**4 attacks**): *Giant Catfish (feelers), Giant Rockfish (spines)*

Spray (also Spit)

0 hp: *Cave Locust (stench), Spitting Cobra (blindness), Water Termites (all types, stun)*

1d6: *Yellow Mould (choking - to death!)*

2d6 (**2 attacks**): *Living Rock Statue (magma)*

Swarm

0 hp: *Bats (confusion)*

2 hp: *Small Insect Swarm*

3 hp: *Medium Insect Swarm*

4 hp: *Large Insect Swarm*

Tentacles

0 hp: *Rhagodessa (grab)*

0 hp (**8 attacks**): *Carcass Crawler (paralysis)*

2d4 (**2 attacks**): *Warp Beast*

1d10: Sea Serpent (hull damage)

1d3 (**8 attacks**): *Giant Octopus (constriction)*

1d4 (**10 attacks**): *Giant Squid (constriction or hull damage)*

Touch

0 hp: *Green Slime (consume flesh), Rust Monster (rusting), Wight (energy drain)*

1d4: *Shadow (strength drain)*

1d6: *Wraith (energy drain)*

1d8: *Spectre (energy drain)*

2d4: *Gelatinous Cube (paralysis)*

1d10: *Vampire (energy drain)*

1d12: *Mummy (disease)*

2d6: *Ochre Jelly*

2d8: *Grey Ooze*

3d8: *Black Pudding*

Trample

2d8: *Rhinoceros, Stegosaurus*

3d6: *Triceratops*

2d12: *Wooly Rhinoceros*

3d8: *Titanothere*

4d8: *Elephant, Mastodon*

THAC0

A creature's THAC0 value is calculated from it's HD. Note that when a creature gets even 1 extra hp over a HD threshold, it falls into the next higher THAC0 category. If you feel that your creature is especially combative, you may want to throw a +1 onto its HD.

Movement

Creatures have a normal speed and an encounter speed (in parenthesis) that is always ⅓ of the normal movement. They are listed in feet per round. Creatures with more than one mode of movement have two such listings. E.g., a cockatrice has movement "90' (30') / 180' (60') flying."

Using normal movement (not encounter movement), here are some basic ranges to consider by type of locomotion:

Walking Speeds

≤10' Crawling: *Yellow Mould, Green Slime, Bat, Shrieker, Grey Ooze*

30' Slow and Steady. *Dragon Turtle, Giant Bat, Giant Vampire Bat, Insect Swarm (all), Living Iron Statue, Ochre Jelly, Stirge*

60' Slow Humanoid: *Acolyte, Basilisk, Black Pudding, Caecilia, Cave Locust, Dwarf, Earth Elemental (all sizes), Gelatinous Cube, Giant Black Widow, Giant Centipede, Giant Crab, Gnome, Goblin, Harpy, Kobold, Living Rock Statue, Lizard Man, Mummy, Noble, Purple Worm, Rat, Roc (all sizes), Skeleton, Sprite, Stegosaurus, Treant, Veteran, Water Elemental (all sizes), Zombie*

90' Average Humanoid: *Black Dragon, Blue Dragon, Bugbear, Cockatrice, Crocodile (any size), Cyclops, Djinni, Lesser, Doppelgänger, Draft Horse, Efreeti, Gargoyle, Ghoul, Giant Leech, Giant Toad, Giant Tuatara, Gnoll, Gold Dragon, Green Dragon, Halfling, Hobgoblin, Living Crystal Statue, Medusa, Merchant, Ogre, Pit Viper, Pixie, Red Dragon, Robber Fly, Rock Python, Shadow, Spitting Cobra, Triceratops, White Dragon, Wight, Wyvern*

120' Fast Humanoid: *Bandit, Berserker, Black Bear, Blink Dog, Bone Golem, Brigand, Buccaneer, Carcass Crawler, Cave Bear, Chimera, Cloud Giant, Dervish, Dryad, Elephant, Elf, Fire Beetle, Fire Elemental (all sizes), Fire Giant, Flame Salamander, Frost Giant, Frost Salamander, Giant Black*

Widow, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Draco, Giant Gecko, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Rat, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Tarantella, Gorgon, Griffon, Grizzly Bear, Hellhound (any size), Hill Giant, Hydra (any number of heads), Invisible Stalker, Mastodon, Medium, Merman, Minotaur, Mule, Neanderthal, Nomad, Normal Human, Oil Beetle, Orc, Owlbear, Pirate, Polar Bear, Rhinoceros, Rock Baboon, Rust Monster, Stone Giant, Thoul, Titanothere, Trader, Troglodyte, Troll, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Vampire, War Horse, Werebear, Wererat, White Ape, Wood Golem, Wooly Rhinoceros, Wraith

150' Faster than Human: *Beetle, Tiger, Boar, Camel, Dire Wolf, Giant Ferret, Giant Scorpion, Giant Weasel, Lion, Mountain Lion, Rhagodessa, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Spectre, Storm Giant, Tiger, Warp Beast, Wereboar, Weretiger*

180' Damn Fast: *Amber Golem, Centaur, Devil Swine, Driver Ant, Giant Shrew, Hippogriff, Werewolf, Wolf*

210' Ludicrously Fast: *Panther*

240' Fastest Alive (or Undead): *Bronze Golem, Horse, Herd Animal (all), Pegasus, Unicorn, Wild Horse*

Swimming Speeds

30': *Rat*

60': *Giant Rat*

90': *Dragon Turtle, Crocodile (any size), Giant Catfish, Giant Octopus, Sea Snake, Swamp (water) Termite*

120': *Lizard Man, Freshwater Termite, Giant Bass, Giant Squid, Nixie*

150': *Giant Piranha, Sea Serpent*

180': *Water Elemental (all sizes), Bull Shark, Giant Rockfish, Giant Sturgeon, Great White Shark, Mako Shark, Narwhal, Saltwater Termite, Sea Dragon, Sperm Whale*

240': *Killer Whale*

Flying Speeds

60': *Insect Swarm (all)*

120': *Bat*

150': *Harpy, Gargoyle, Killer Bee*

180': *Giant Bat, Giant Vampire Bat, Stirge, Cave Locust, Sprite, Cockatrice, Pixie, Robber Fly, Chimera, Pterodactyl*

240': *Black Dragon, Blue Dragon, Djinni, Efreeti, Gold Dragon Green Dragon, Red Dragon, White Dragon, Wyvern, Wraith, Pteranodon*

300': *Spectre*

360': *Griffon, Hippogriff, Air Elemental (all sizes)*

450': *Giant Hawk*

480': *Roc (all), Pegasus, Hawk*

Saves

Monsters usually save according to their hit dice. Exceptions are that relative dumb creatures, typical animals, and really massive creatures usually save at a lower HD, while creatures that are smart (for their size) or magical, tend to save at a higher HD level.

Saves at Lower HD

Amber Golem, Black Bear, Black Pudding, Boar, Bone Golem, Bronze Golem, Bull Shark, Caecilia, Camel, Carcass Crawler, Cave Bear, Crocodile, Dire Wolf, Draft Horse, Dragon Turtle, Driver Ant, Elephant, Gelatinous Cube, Giant Bass, Giant Bat, Giant Black Widow, Giant Catfish, Giant Crab, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Crocodile, Giant Draco, Giant Gecko, Giant Hawk, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Leech, Giant Octopus, Giant Piranha, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Rockfish, Giant Scorpion, Giant Squid, Giant Sturgeon, Giant Tarantella, Giant Toad, Giant Tuatara, Giant Vampire Bat, Giant Weasel, Goblin, Great White Shark, Green Slime, Grey Ooze, Griffon, Grizzly Bear, Herd Animal (all), Hippogriff, Horse, Insect Swarm (all), Killer Whale, Large Crocodile, Lion, Mako Shark, Mastodon, Mountain Lion, Mule, Ochre Jelly, Oil Beetle, Owlbear, Panther, Pit Viper, Polar Bear, Pteranodon, Purple Worm, Rat, Rhagodessa, Rhinoceros, Robber Fly, Roc (all), Rock Python, Rust Monster, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Saltwater Termite, Sea Serpent, Sea Snake, Shrieker, Sperm Whale, Stegosaurus, Tiger, Tiger Beetle, Titanothere, Triceratops, Tyrannosaurus Rex, War Horse, White Ape, Wild Horse, Wolf, Wood Golem, Wooly Rhinoceros, Wyvern, Zombie

Saves at Higher HD

Giant Rat, Killer Bee, Sprite, Stirge, Dryad, Gargoyle, Unicorn, Efreeti, Doppelgänger, Djinni

Morale

Range: 5 to 12, higher is better.

The characterizations provided may not work perfectly for every creature, but they are perhaps a helpful generalization.

Creatures with an asterisk have +2 morale when in the presence of a leader (goblin king, dwarf leader, etc.). Merchants stand alone as

having a "variable" Morale. One might assume this relates to how much money is at stake.

5 Evasive. Actively flees whenever it can. *Cave Locust, Herd Animal (all), Rat*

6 Cautious. Eager to avoid/leave a fight barring major advantage or need. *Bat, Blink Dog, Buccaneer, Draft Horse, Dryad, Giant Toad, Giant Tuatara, Kobold*, Orc, Nixie, Normal Human, Rhinoceros, Wolf, Wooly Rhinoceros*

7 Disinterested. Prefers to fight dirty or with advantage. Quickly loses interest if outmatched. *Acolyte, Black Bear, Bull Shark, Camel, Cockatrice, Crocodile, Driver Ant, Fire Beetle, Giant Centipede, Giant Crab, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Draco, Giant Gecko, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Octopus, Giant Piranha, Giant Squid, Goblin*, Great White Shark, Halfing, Harpy, Hawk, Horse, Large Crocodile, Mako Shark, Medium, Neanderthal, Pirate, Pit Viper, Pixie, Pterodactyl, Rust Monster, Sea Snake, Sperm Whale, Spitting Cobra, Sprite,* *Stegosaurus, Titanothere, Trader, Unicorn, White Ape, Wild Horse*

8 Balanced. Will consider the situation and prey before attacking. Will usually fight fiercely in defense. *Bandit, Black Dragon, Brigand, Centaur, Dire Wolf, Dwarf*, Elephant, Elf*, Flame Salamander, Freshwater Termite, Giant Bass, Giant Bat, Giant Black Widow, Giant Catfish, Giant Ferret, Giant Hawk, Giant Rat, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Rockfish, Giant Tarantella, Giant Vampire Bat, Giant Weasel, Gnoll, Gnome*, Gorgon, Griffon, Grizzly Bear, Hill Giant, Hippogriff, Hobgoblin*, Mastodon, Medusa, Merman, Mountain Lion, Mule, Narwhal, Noble, Nomad, Oil Beetle, Panther, Pegasus, Polar Bear, Pteranodon, Robber Fly, Rock Baboon, Rock Python, Sea Serpent, Small Roc, Triceratops, Warp Beast, Wererat, Werewolf, White Dragon*

9 Fierce. Opportunistically aggressive and reluctant to withdraw. *Basilisk, Blue Dragon, Boar, Bugbear, Caecilia, Carcass Crawler, Cave Bear, Chimera, Cyclops, Fire Giant, Frost Giant, Frost Salamander, Ghoul, Giant Crocodile, Giant Sturgeon, Green Dragon, Hellhound, Killer Bee, Large Roc, Lion, Owlbear, Rhagodessa, Sea Dragon, Stirge, Stone Giant, Tiger, Tiger Beetle, Treant,*

Troglodyte, Veteran, War Horse, Wereboar, Weretiger, Wyvern

10 Aggressive. Ready to fight: territorial, always hungry, or just touchy. *Cloud Giant, Dervish, Devil Swine, Doppelgänger, Dragon Turtle, Elementals (all types and sizes), Giant Leech, Giant Roc, Giant Shrew, Gold Dragon, Killer Whale, Ogre, Purple Worm, Red Dragon, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Storm Giant, Swamp Termite, Thoul, Troll, Werebear*

11 Tenacious. Will retreat only in dire circumstances, and sometimes not even then. *Gargoyle, Giant Scorpion, Insect Swarm (all), Living Crystal Statue, Living Iron Statue, Living Rock Statue, Saltwater Termite, Spectre, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Vampire*

12 Mindless or fearless. Will always fight to the end. *Amber Golem, Berserker, Black Pudding, Bone Golem, Bronze Golem, Djinni, Efreeti, Gelatinous Cube, Green Slime, Grey Ooze, Invisible Stalker, Lizard Man, Minotaur, Mummy, Ochre Jelly, Shadow, Shrieker, Skeleton, Wight, Wood Golem, Wraith, Yellow Mould, Zombie*

Alignment

There's not much to say here. The vast majority of creatures are neutral. Humanoids, especially humans, are variable in alignment. So all that is left is to list the exclusively Lawful and Chaotic creatures.

Lawful

Blink Dog, Dervish, Giant Roc, Gold Dragon, Halfing, Large Roc, Living Crystal Statue, Narwhal, Neanderthal, Pegasus, Small Roc, Storm Giant, Treant, Unicorn

Chaotic

Black Dragon, Brigand, Bugbear, Chimera, Cyclops, Devil Swine, Doppelgänger, Dragon Turtle, Efreeti, Fire Giant, Frost Giant, Frost Salamander, Gargoyle, Ghoul, Giant Scorpion, Gnoll, Goblin, Gorgon, Green Dragon, Harpy, Hellhound, Hill Giant, Hobgoblin, Kobold, Living Rock Statue, Medusa, Minotaur, Mummy, Ogre, Orc*, Pirate, Red Dragon, Shadow, Skeleton, Spectre, Thoul, Troglodyte, Troll, Vampire, Wererat, Werewolf, Wight, Wraith, Wyvern, Zombie

XP

In this particular, OSE is pretty clear. XP is determined using the creatures HD and a simple table, adjusting upward for extra abilities. Keep in mind that the Treasure Type you choose may actually influence earned XP more!

#Appearing

Number Appearing is a little deceiving at first blush. The first number is really relative to a dungeon environment; the second to wilderness and/or a creature's lair. (Though that begs the question, what if they lair in the dungeon? Presumably you would then use the second number.)

The first thing to observe is probably creatures not found in one place or the other.

Not Found in Dungeon

Brigand, Buccaneer, Bull Shark, Camel, Centaur, Crocodile, Dervish, Draft Horse, Dragon Turtle, Dryad, Elephant, Freshwater Termite, Giant Bass, Giant Catfish, Giant Crocodile, Giant Hawk, Giant Leech, Giant Octopus, Giant Piranha, Giant Rockfish, Giant Squid, Giant Sturgeon, Great White Shark, Griffon, Hawk, Herd Animals, (all), Hippogriff, Horse, Killer Whale, Large Crocodile, Mako Shark, Mastodon, Merchant, Merman, Narwhal, Nixie, Nomad, Pegasus, Pirate, Pteranodon, Pterodactyl, Rhinoceros, Roc (all sizes), Saltwater Termite, Sea Dragon, Sea Serpent, Sperm Whale, Stegosaurus, Swamp Termite, Titanothere, Treant, Triceratops, Tyrannosaurus Rex, War Horse, Wild Horse, Wooly Rhinoceros

Not Found in the Wild

Black Pudding, Draft Horse, Gelatinous Cube, Green Slime, Riding Horse, Ochre Jelly, Shrieker, War Horse
Horses and War Horses of course refer to domesticated ones, which would be rare to find wandering around. And all things are relative. Who's to say your mad wizard doesn't have a giant shark tank in his personal dungeon?

Next it's worth looking at what types of creatures are solitary in either environment. By solitary, I mean they appear in an average number of less than 2. One supposes they occasionally get together for ... uh ... *reasons*.

I don't think there are any real surprises in this list. Maybe it's just because I watch a lot of nature shows, but even for fantasy creatures the Number Appearing has a logical feel to it. I can guess

whether a creature is likely to be solitary or have a pack mentality.

Solitary in Dungeon

Amber Golem, Black Pudding, Bone Golem, Bronze Golem, Cave Bear, Chimera, Cloud Giant, Cyclops, Djinni, Efreeti, Fire Giant, Frost Giant, Gelatinous Cube, Giant Crab, Giant Tuatara, Gorgon, Green Slime, Grey Ooze, Grizzly Bear, Hydra (all), Insect Swarm (all), Invisible Stalker, Ochre Jelly, Panther, Polar Bear, Purple Worm, Stone Giant, Storm Giant, Tiger, Wood Golem, Wyvern

Solitary in Lair/Wild

Amber Golem, Bone Golem, Bronze Golem, Cave Bear, Djinni, Dragon Turtle, Efreeti, Elemental (all types and sizes), Giant Catfish, Giant Octopus, Giant Roc, Giant Sturgeon, Grey Ooze, Hydra (all), Invisible Stalker, Polar Bear, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Wood Golem

Next we can look at small groups and packs. The distinctions here are subjective, but based on the observable distribution.

Small groups are 2-5 individuals, on average. One might think of these as small family units or creatures that like to gang up but don't need to work (or are uncomfortable in) large numbers. Perhaps in-fighting for mating rights or whatever becomes common as the group size gets bigger.

Small Group (2-5) in Dungeon

Acolyte, Bandit, Basilisk, Berserker, Black Bear, Black Dragon, Blink Dog, Blue Dragon, Boar, Bugbear, Caecilia, Carcass Crawler, Cockatrice, Devil Swine, Dire Wolf, Doppelgänger, Driver Ant, Dwarf, Elf, Fire Beetle, Flame Salamander, Frost Salamander, Gargoyle, Ghoul, Giant Bat, Giant Black Widow, Giant Centipede, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Draco, Giant Ferret, Giant Gecko, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Scorpion, Giant Shrew, Giant Tarantella, Giant Toad, Giant Vampire Bat, Giant Weasel, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Gold Dragon, Green Dragon, Harpy, Hellhound (all), Hill Giant, Hobgoblin, Killer Bee, Lion, Living Crystal Statue, Living Iron Statue, Living Rock Statue, Lizard Man, Medium, Medusa, Minotaur, Mountain Lion, Mule, Mummy, Neanderthal, Normal Human, Ogre, Oil Beetle, Orc, Owlbear, Pit Viper, Pixie, Red Dragon, Rhagodessa, Robber Fly, Rock Python, Rust Monster, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Sea Snake, Shadow, Shrieker, Spectre, Spitting Cobra, Stirge, Thoul, Tiger Beetle, Trader, Troglodyte, Troll, Unicorn, Vampire (all), Veteran (all), Warp Beast, Werebear, Wereboar, Wererat, Weretiger, Werewolf, White Ape, White Dragon, Wight, Wraith, Yellow Mould, Zombie

Small Group (2-5) in Lair/Wild

Basilisk, Black Bear, Black Dragon, Blink Dog, Blue Dragon, Boar, Caecilia, Camel, Carcass Crawler,

Cave Locust, Chimera, Cloud Giant, Cockatrice, Crocodile, Cyclops, Devil Swine, Dire Wolf, Doppelgänger, Dryad, Fire Giant, Flame Salamander, Freshwater Termite, Frost Giant, Frost Salamander, Gargoyle, Giant Bass, Giant Bat, Giant Black Widow, Giant Centipede, Giant Crab, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Crocodile, Giant Draco, Giant Gecko, Giant Hawk, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Leech, Giant Piranha, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Rockfish, Giant Scorpion, Giant Shrew, Giant Squid, Giant Tarantella, Giant Toad, Giant Tuatara, Giant Vampire Bat, Giant Weasel, Gold Dragon, Gorgon, Great White Shark, Green Dragon, Grizzly Bear, Harpy, Hawk, Hellhound (all), Hill Giant, Insect Swarm (all), Killer Whale, Large Crocodile, Large Roc, Lion, Living Crystal Statue, Living Iron Statue, Living Rock Statue, Medusa, Minotaur, Mountain Lion, Narwhal, Owlbear, Panther, Pit Viper, Pteranodon, Pterodactyl, Purple Worm, Red Dragon, Rhagodessa, Rock Python, Rust Monster, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Saltwater Termite, Sea Dragon, Sea Snake, Spectre, Sperm Whale, Spitting Cobra, Stegosaurus, Stone Giant, Storm Giant, Swamp Termite, Thoul, Tiger, Tiger Beetle, Titanothere, Treant, Triceratops, Troll, Unicorn, Vampire (all), Warp Beast, Werebear, Wereboar, Weretiger, White Ape, White Dragon, Wight, Wooly Rhinoceros, Wraith, Wyvern, Yellow Mould

Packs average 6-12 in the Dungeon and 6-19 in the Wild. (The spread of data in the wild is a bit larger in scope, as you might expect.) You'll note that numbers very quickly taper off in a dungeon environment. In fact, there are only two creatures that congregate in numbers larger than a dozen, as you will see.

Packs (6-12) in Dungeon

Cave Locust, Giant Rat, Halfing, Kobold, Noble, Rock Baboon, Skeleton, Sprite, Wolf

Packs (6-19) in Lair/Wild

Acolyte, Bandit, Berserker, Bugbear, Bull Shark, Centaur, Driver Ant, Elephant, Elf, Fire Beetle, Ghoul, Giant Ferret, Giant Rat, Gnoll, Griffon, Herd Animal (all) Hippogriff, Hobgoblin, Killer Bee, Mako Shark, Mastodon, Medium, Merchant, Merman, Mule, Mummy, Noble, Normal Human, Ogre, Oil Beetle, Pegasus, Rat, Rhinoceros, Robber Fly, Rock Baboon, Sea Serpent, Shadow, Skeleton, Small Roc, Stirge, Trader, Veteran (all), Wererat, Werewolf, Wolf, Zombie

What is a horde? I would say it's a creature that feels most comfortable in large groups. When it comes to humanoids, it may involve a necessary social structure. For instance Brigands work together to terrorize an area and need numbers to withstand whatever law enforcement there

might be, or (more importantly) squash rivals. Other humanoids might simply need numbers to compete, such as Halflings and Kobolds.

Hordes (20 to 55) in Dungeon

Bat, Rat

Hordes (20 to 55) in Lair/Wild

Bat, Brigand, Dervish, Dwarf, Gnome, Goblin, Halfing, Kobold, Lizard Man, Neanderthal, Nixie, Nomad, Orc, Pixie, Sprite, Troglodyte, Wild Horse

Treasure Type

As portrayed in the *OSE Rules Tome* Treasure Types are a bit hard to decode. In fact, the alphabet of Treasure Types doesn't make a lot of sense, though there are some broad categories:

Types A-O are Hoards
P-T are Individual Treasures
U-V are Group Treasures
According to the rules, hoards are the wealth of a large monster or community of small ones. (Hilariously, a Kobold hoard is worth about 25 gp in total, which makes total sense as the average treasure of a single Kobold is in copper coins worth less than 1 gp.)

Individual treasure is the amount carried by each creature or on the bodies of victims.

Group treasure, like a hoard, is a shared sum. The main difference is probably where and how it is stored. A group might carry treasure with them whereas a hoard will typically be secured in a fixed location.

Treasure types below are listed in order of increasing value (though a few variable types have been inserted at seemly places).

No Treasure

Despite the following having no treasure, it's certainly possible that harvesting parts or even just meat (mmm Giant Crab) would pay off. (See Other below.)

Amber Golem, Bat, Black Pudding, Boar, Bone Golem, Bronze Golem, Bull Shark, Camel, Cave Locust, Crocodile, Dire Wolf, Djinni, Draft Horse, Elemental (all types and sizes), Efreeti, Fire Beetle, Freshwater Termite, Giant Bass, Giant Bat, Giant Catfish, Giant Centipede, Giant Crab, Giant Crocodile, Giant Ferret, Giant Hawk, Giant Leech, Giant Octopus, Giant Piranha, Giant Rockfish, Giant Shrew, Giant Sturgeon, Giant Toad, Giant Vampire Bat, Great White Shark, Green Slime, Grey Ooze, Hawk, Herd Animal (all),

Hippogriff, Horse, Invisible Stalker, Insect Swarm (all), Large Crocodile, Living Crystal Statue, Living Iron Statue, Living Rock Statue, Mako Shark, Mule, Ochre Jelly, Oil Beetle, Pegasus, Pit Viper, Pterodactyl, Rhinoceros, Rust Monster, Saltwater Termite, Sea Serpent, Sea Snake, Shrieker, Skeleton, Spitting Cobra, Stegosaurus, Swamp Termite, Titanothere, Triceratops, Unicorn, War Horse, White Ape, Wild Horse, Wolf, Wood Golem, Wooly Rhinoceros, Yellow Mould, Zombie

Type Other/Specific

Average value is probably in the 100s of GP, but there is a huge difference between Killer Bee honey and Elephant ivory. And why is a Mastodon tusk worth something but not a Unicorn or Triceratops horn? Be creative and encourage creative thinking.

Elephant (tusks), Killer Bee (honey), Mastodon (tusks), Narwhal (horn),

Type P: <1 GP avg.

Individual treasure, copper coins: *Berserker, Kobold*

Type Q: 1 GP avg.

Individual treasure, silver coins: *no representative creatures*

Type R: 3 GP avg.

Individual treasure, electrum coins: *Goblin*

Type S: 5 GP avg.

Individual treasure, gold coins: *Sprite*

Type R + S: 8 GP avg.

Individual treasure, electrum and Gold coins: *Pixie*

Type T: 17 GP avg.

Individual treasure, platinum coins only: *no representative creatures*

Type J: 25 GP avg.

Hoard, copper and silver coins: *Kobolds (in lair)*

Type U: 160 GP avg.

Group treasure, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 2% chance of 1 magic item. *Acolyte, Bandit, Black Bear, Driver Ant, Giant Black Widow, Giant Crab Spider, Giant Draco, Giant Gecko, Giant Horned Chameleon, Giant Rattlesnake, Giant Tarantella, Grizzly Bear, Lion, Mountain Lion, Normal Human, Panther, Polar Bear, Rhagodessa, Robber Fly, Rock Baboon, Rock Python, Tiger, Tiger Beetle*

Type K: 180 GP avg.

Hoard, silver and Electrum coins: *no representative creatures.*

Type L: 240 GP avg.

Hoard, gems: *Rat, Stirge*

Type V: 330 GP avg.

Group treasure, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 5% chance of 1 magic item. *Cave Bear, Halfling Gelatinous Cube, Giant Scorpion, Giant Squid, Giant Tuatara, Giant Weasel, Killer Whale, Medium, Pteranodon, Sabre-Toothed Tiger, Sperm Whale, Veteran (all)*

Type U + V: 490 GP avg.

Group treasure (see U and V). *Trader*

Type V x 3: 990 GP avg.

Group treasure (See V). *Noble, Tyrannosaurus Rex*

Type C: 1,000 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 10% chance of 2 magic items. *Blink Dog, Devil Swine, Gargoyle, Giant Rat, Goblin (in lair or in the wild), Gnome, Harpy, Hellhound (all), Minotaur, Neanderthal, Ogre, Owlbear, Thoul, Treant, Werebear, Wereboar, Wererat, Weretiger, Werewolf*

Type B: 2,000 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 10% chance of a magic weapon or armor. *Berserker (in lair), Bugbear, Caecilia, Carcass Crawler, Ghoul, Halfling (in lair), Hydra (all), Nixie, Wight*

Type E: 2,300 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 25% chance of 3 magic items and a scroll. *Doppelgänger, Elf, Frost Salamander, Gorgon, Griffon, Spectre, Wraith, Wyvern*

Type D: 3,900 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 15% chance of 2 magic items and a potion. *Cockatrice, Dryad, Gnoll, Hobgoblin, Lizard Man, Mummy, Orc, Purple Worm, Troll, Warp Beast*

Type E + 5,000 GP: 7,300 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 25% chance of 3 magic items and a scroll. *Cloud Giant, Cyclops, Fire Giant, Frost Giant, Hill Giant, Stone Giant, Storm Giant*

Type F: 7,700 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 30% chance of 3 magic items (not weapons), plus a potion and a scroll. *Basilisk, Chimera, Flame Salamander, Medusa, Shadow, Vampire (all)*

Type I: 11,000 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 15% chance of a magic item. *Rocs (all)*

Type A: 18,000 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 30% chance of 3 magic items. *Bandit (in lair), Brigand, Buccaneer, Centaur, Dervish, Merchant, Merman, Nomad, Pirate, Troglodyte*

Type G: 23,000 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 35% chance of 4 magic items and a scroll. *Dwarf*

Type M: 50,000 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, and jewelry. No magic. *No representative creatures.*

Type H: 60,000 GP avg.

Hoard, coins, gems, jewelry, and a 15% chance of 4 magic items plus a potion and a scroll. *Black Dragon, Blue Dragon, Dragon Turtle, Gold Dragon, Green Dragon, Red Dragon, Sea Dragon, White Dragon*

Type N: Variable

Hoard, potions. *No representative creatures.*

Type O: Variable

Hoard, scrolls. *No representative creatures.*

Errors and Omissions

It's almost certain that I have made a few mistakes in collecting these lists. It was not an easy task for two reasons. 1) there is no readily available spreadsheet-like source of the information, so I had to make one. Further, the OSE SRD has errors in it, so I had to work from the print copy. That much data entry by one person with no QA … well it would be a miracle if I didn't do a typo or scribal eye-skip at some point. 2) The data itself isn't exactly perfect. Sometimes data is variable or a creature has optional lines, like a higher morale near a leader or a variation in damage by number of heads or arms a creature of that type has (e.g. hydra). Other times it is organized differently (in the creature notes vs. in the stat block). Most of this has been accounted for and feathered in where possible, but I would be a fool to think I always did it perfectly or consistently.

All this is to say, if something looks "off," feel free to check it and then send me an email at rayotus@gmail.com. I'd love the chance to make a correction here and there.

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