

DRAGONHEAD

DRAGONHEAD is a fantasy adventure game for two to six players questing for gold and glory in a dangerous land. It is played using paper, pencils, dice and imagination.

If you swear you have heard this all before, that's because you have. Dragonhead is an OSR game, meaning *Old School Rules*, meaning it was designed to carry the feel of rpgs from the late 1970's and early 1980's with an emphasis on speed and adventure over everything else. In this kit - the Dungeon Adventure Kit - you will find the following four books.

Dragonhead Bangers Handbook. The DBH contains the core rules of the game. If you have never played an RPG it's good to understand that you *do not need to know all the rules to play the game*. Read this book to get a basic understanding of how it works and the rest you can figure out later.

Dungeon Character Compendium. The DCC contains all of the stuff that goes into character creation such as classes, equipment and spells. Often characters are created using the Banger's Handbook and Character Compendium side by side.

Dragonhead Master's Guide. The DMG is for the Dragonhead Master to read and everyone else to eventually discover by playing the game. It is critically important that you **do not read** the DMG or anything written for the DM unless you plan on becoming a Dragonhead Master.

Dungeon Monsters & Treasure. The DMT is like the Character Compendium but for Dragonhead Masters. It is the stuff that adventures are made of and also for the DM's eyes only!

Other Adventure Kits. In addition to **Dungeon Adventures** there are two other kits in the system. **Wilderness Adventures** is for exploring the great outdoors. **Regal Adventures** is for dealing with kingdoms, armies and beyond.

You do not need those kits to play **Dungeon Adventures**, but they will need this one. Because of this you may find references to things in **Dungeon Adventures** which are not in it, such as the spells *Create Focusing Tool*, and *Scry*. Those you will just have to find in the other kits once you get the chance.

What You Need

Dragonhead Bangers. Dragonhead Bangers are the players of the game, intrepid souls eager to embark on epic quests in ages untold. *This is you!* Your armaments? A freshly printed character sheet, a pencil with a good eraser and a set of dice. Miniatures are optional. Imagination essential!

Dragonhead Master. The Dragonhead Master represents the world the adventure takes place in and plays the part of the creatures you will encounter. If you don't have a DM, everyone at the table should roll **1d20**. Whoever rolls the biggest number is the group's Dragonhead Master. *All hail the new DM!*

Characters & Creatures. Bangers run Characters while the Master runs Creatures. For the most part these two terms are inter-changeable and play by the same rules. Unless something says otherwise, what applies to characters applies to creatures and vice-versa.

An Adventure Module. A adventure module should contain everything you need for a few nights of exciting gaming. It is up to the DM to acquire one and read it through before the game begins.

If you have been thrust into the DM's seat be sure to check out the starting adventure in the *Dragonhead Master's Guide*. It was made for new DMs to run with little to no preparation.

Big Bag-O-Dice. You need at least one set of polyhedrals containing a **d4**, **d6**, **d8**, **d10**, **d12**, **d20** and **d00**. The game plays best with three d6's and two d10's.

If you don't know dice, the d-number is the number of sides on a die so a d6 is your standard six-sided die. When a number has been tacked onto the front, that is the number of times you roll it. A 3d6 translates to "roll three six-sided dice" or "roll a six-sided die three times." Add them together and the total is your result. If a number has been added to the roll, such as 3d6+2, add that in too.

The **d2** is a die that doesn't actually exist but does pop up from time to time. Roll any die and an odd number will give you a 1 while an even number is a 2.

Percentile Dice. Many tables use percentile dice, also known as a **1d100**. Roll the d00 and the d10 together. The d00 is a ten-sider with double digits on each face. It provides the tens digit and the d10 the ones digit.

When the d00 rolls 20 and the d10 a 1 that's a 21.

When the d00 rolls 20 and the d10 a 0 that's a 20.

When the d00 rolls 00 and the d10 a 1 that's a 1.

When the d00 rolls 00 and the d10 a 0 that's 100.

Merlins. Merlins are plastic gold coins often sold as *Pirate's Treasure* in costume shops. Poker chips, checkers or even normal coins will work but we highly recommend the plastic gold ones. You will also need a bowl to collect them in as they are spent during the game.

Every game officially begins with each banger rolling to see how many Merlin's they start with. What you roll depends on the number of bangers at the table.

One to Three = **2d6 each**.

Four or More = **2d4 each**.

Be sure to show up to the game on time! Show up late and you still get to play but you don't get any Merlins.

A Place to Play. Preferably a large table with nice seats in a room without much noise. If you can't hear what everyone else is saying you cannot play the game. If snacks will be served, be sure to bring something to share or at least be ready to throw in for a pizza.

Always Round Down. The math in this game is nothing complex, but sometimes it will leave you with a decimal point. Unless something says otherwise – **round down** – discard the decimal and go with what is left. Both a 3.5 and a 3.99999 round down to 3.

Threshold Tables

Dragonhead makes extensive use of what we call **Threshold Tables**. Each entry has a single line number. When the dice roll that number or higher - without crossing the next threshold - that is what you get.

1: Elves.
5: Orcs.
10: Dragons.
15: Giants.

With this table, if you rolled a 7 on a 1d20 you rolled up an encounter with some Orcs. A roll of 10 to 14 would change it to Dragons. Rolling a 15 or higher would change it to Giants.

The great thing about threshold tables is that they can be arranged in ascending or descending order because we always count from low to high. To save space they may even be laid out on their side like so.

1: Elves. 5: Orcs. 10: Dragons. 15: Giants.

Gaming Style

How you choose to play depends on who you play with and what you enjoy. Every group is different but two major styles predominate: **Immersive** and **Omniscient** gaming.

Immersive Gaming. With immersive gaming each player has one character and they play that character the way an actor plays a role. While seated at the table you become your character. You speak as that character might speak and use its name in place of your own. If someone calls you by your actual name you are honor-bound to stare at them as if you have no idea what they are talking about. It is only when you stand up from the table that you return to being yourself.

Omniscient Gaming. Instead of actors, in an omniscient game you and your friends are more like unacknowledged gods presiding over the adventure spread out before you. You often run more than one character, rolling the dice of fate and leading them about. Sometimes you speak as your characters. Other times you talk as if they are standing in the room with you. In an omniscient game it can feel like the group determines what the characters will do, yet in the end the player holding the character sheet ultimately decides what that character will do.

Choosing a Style. How you choose to play is between you and your friends, but this is something you should nail down before the game begins. Dragonhead supports both styles and doesn't consider one to be better than the other. However, it will admit that Immersive gaming works best with large groups of people while Omniscient gaming is better for small ones. What does not work is having some at the table playing Immersively while the others are trying to play Omnisciently.

Choose one or the other.

Games Without End

If you haven't figured it out by now, Dragonhead is not a board game where you race around a maze and whoever makes it to the end first is the winner. This a *game without end*. You win it by having fun while playing it. An adventure can last a single night or ramble on for years.

Unfortunately, life has a terrible way of trampling long campaigns, so if you must leave early, be sure to hand your characters off to your friends. Yes, they may make your barbarian walk around with his bearskin speedo on his head, but at least the adventure can continue on without you.

For the same reason, at the end of the night ***all character sheets go back to the DM***. This way the group can pick up where it last left off, even if not everyone who played the last time around could make it to the game.

Real Playing Games

You thought the R stood for Role? *Not in Dragonhead*. Here the R stands for **Real**. While there is a decent amount of role-playing involved and many fantastic things can happen, at base we play by reality's rules hence the name ***Real Playing Game***.

Ultimately, this is what separates all RPGs from other games. In Monopoly you can only move around the board in a clockwise direction. Your actions are limited to buying hotels, paying rent, drawing cards, etc. If Monopoly were Dragonhead you could cut across the board, break your friends out of jail and party like rock stars, trashing the hotels on Boardwalk.

You might not get away with it, but you could try.

When it comes to what a character can or cannot do in an RPG, we imagine it all happening as if it were really happening and go with what our imaginations show us, keeping things true to life.

The rules are not here to limit your actions.

The rules are here to make the fantasy seem real.

CHARACTER CREATION

Read through the following steps while filling out your character sheet with a pencil. Once you've done this and understand the process you should be able to create characters quickly using just our **Character Creation Cheat Sheet** as a guide.

If you don't have a character sheet, visit the website at www.chameleondream.com/dragonhead for a PDF. Otherwise, wrangle up some dice, grab that sheet and let's go!

1.) Abilities

Each character is defined by nine abilities. Roll **3d6** for each. Each ability is identified by the first three letters of its name. Mus = Muscle. Put the score in the small circle beside the ability diamond.

The first three are your physical abilities. **Muscle** is a measure of physical strength. **Dexterity** is your ability to move with speed and precision. **Constitution** is a measure of your health and natural good looks.

The second three are your mental abilities. **Intellect** is the sharpness of your mind. **Wisdom** is your intuition and perception. **Charisma** is your force of personality.

The last three are your metaphysical abilities. **Spirit** is your willpower. **Magic** is your ability to wield the forces of magic. **Luck** is the grace of the universe shining upon you, or possibly not.

Ability Scores. For ability scores a 10 is considered perfectly average. After rolling all of your scores, if you have any that are **6 or less** you may re-roll them but only after re-rolling your greatest ability first. So if you roll...

Muscle 3
Dexterity 6
Constitution 17

Intellect 10
Wisdom 12
Charisma 14

Spirit 11
Magic 12
Luck 9

You may re-roll your Muscle but only after first re-rolling your Constitution. If this leaves you with Constitution 12 you may re-roll your Dexterity but only after rerolling your Charisma. For each re-roll you need to re-roll your greatest score.

Ability Modifiers. Ability scores do not get much use during the game, instead we use ability's modifier. The table below will tell you what each score is worth. Put its modifier in the ability diamond on your character sheet.

0: -5 2: -4 4: -3 6: -2 8: -1 10: +0 12: +1
14: +2 16: +3 18: +4 20: +5 22: +6 24: +7 26:
+8 28: +9 30: +10

2.) Classes

There are three kinds of classes in Dragonhead: Races, Callings and Transformations. **Race** a character is born into such as Elf, Halfling or Dwarf. **Callings** are life-defining obsessions a character feels called to pursue like Cleric, Fighter or Wizard. They are all human by default. **Transformations** are caused by the game itself, transforming your character into something like a Vampire or Werewolf.

Choose a class from the *Character Compendium*. Something that plays to your best ability scores. This is what the **Recommended Abilities** are all about. Fighter recommends Muscle, Dexterity and Constitution. If those are your best abilities you will probably make a good fighter.

Write the class name on your sheet, just across from the title of your Muscle score. Put a 1 in the column on the far right side for 1st level.

Features. Below this jot down the class **Features**. What you can use a class for is intentionally left open-ended, but there are a number of features that it pays to have written down so you don't forget about them. Many are named after entries in *Adventure* for quick reference.

If a feature is followed by a • spot, blacken in that spot on your character sheet. This tells us the feature uses the class level bonus. If a ½ or a modifier (+1, +2, etc) follows the spot write that to the right of the spot. The ½ means you only get half your level bonus when you use the feature. A +1 or +2 adds to the use of the feature whether it gets the level bonus or not.

Class Level Bonus. Your level bonus is equal to your class level. A 1st level Fighter has a +1 level bonus. A half level bonus is equal to half your level bonus rounded down. Half of +1 is .5 which rounds down to +0.

Body Size. Most character classes are **Medium** in size. Some like the Halfling and Gnome are not. It's highly recommended that your first character be medium-sized. All you need to do is write **Medium** where it says **Size** on your sheet, and follow it with your Size Dodge bonus: **Lar +2, Ext +4, Big +6**. See *Body Size* in *Adventure* for more.

3.) Hit Points

Hit Points are used to track the amount of exhaustion you can take before falling unconscious, as well as the amount of physical damage you can take before dying.

Start with what your class provides as its **Base HP** amount. With each of your **Muscle**, **Constitution** and **Spirit** use the table below to see how it adds or subtracts from your hit points. If this drops you below 1 you end up with a hit point count of 1.

30:	+20
29:	+19
28:	+18
27:	+17
26:	+16
25:	+15
24:	+14
23:	+13
22:	+12
21:	+11
20:	+10
19:	+9
18:	+8
17:	+7
16:	+6
15:	+5
14:	+4
13:	+3
12:	+2
11:	+1
10:	+0
9:	-1
8:	-2
7:	-3
6:	-4
5:	-5
4:	-6
3:	-7
2:	-8
1:	-9

All humans start with 10 base hit points. If you have Muscle 12, Constitution 11 and Spirit 14. You would end up with $10 + 2 + 1 + 4 = 17$ hit points.

The circles below HP are used to record hit point damage. Count out that many circles and put the letter **D** in the one that follows it.

Damage Type is also important. Unless your class says differently put the numbers - **p1**, **s2**, **m3**, **b4**, **i6** - next to their letters on your sheet.

4.) Equipment

Classes come with **free** equipment! This is the stuff your character has accumulated on the way to becoming who they are. You may swap out items for similar ones of an equal or lesser value, but all of it will be in used condition. Try to hock any of it and you will find it worth barely half the market value.

Buying Equipment. If you want more control over what your character has you can skip the free equipment and simply buy what you need from the *Character Compendium*. Roll **3d6**, multiply by **10**, and that is the number of copper pieces you have to spend.

Coinage. The world of Dragonhead runs on coins, each weighing a hefty **tenth** of a pound. The copper piece or CP is the coin of the realm and any price with a \$ is in coppers. After buying equipment if you have any money left over you may change it into a different metal to make it more portable.

1 Gold Piece = GP = \$100

1 Silver Piece = SP = \$10

1 Copper Piece = CP = \$1

Encumberment. Your **Muscle** score determines your **Base Load**, aka the pounds of stuff you can carry before becoming encumbered.

30:	360
29:	335
28:	310
27:	290
26:	270
25:	250
24:	230
23:	210
22:	190
21:	175
20:	160
19:	145
18:	130
17:	115
16:	100
15:	90
14:	80
13:	70
12:	60
11:	50
10:	40
9:	35
8:	30
7:	25

6 : 20
5 : 15
4 : 10
3 : 05
2 : 02
1 : 01

Take this number, multiply it by the following and write the totals below your equipment on the character sheet.

Lugg = Base Load x 1 = Bulk -2

Trudge = Base Load x 2 = Bulk -4

Strain = Base Load x 3 = Bulk -6

Stop = Base Load x 4 = Bulk -8

Bulk. Bulk is the hindrance your character will suffer while carrying that amount or more. It applies to everything you do and is best avoided. To stay unencumbered, keep your total equipment weight below your Lugging amount. If you end up with a bulk penalty be sure to write it on the front of your sheet where it says **Hinders**.

As far as speed is concerned. Your character cannot run while Lugging or worse. Movement speeds drop by **half** at Trudging. A Stopped character cannot move and is struggling to remain upright. You cannot carry more than your Stopped weight.

Pack Weight. There are two columns in equipment, **Wt** and **Pack**. Wt is for recording the weight of anything on your person. Pack is for the weight of anything kept in a pack of some sort, including the pack itself. We do this so you can drop your pack in an emergency and lighten your load. In class descriptions, items kept in your pack are marked with an asterisk.

Keeping Track of Encumbrance. Characters pick up and drop stuff all the time. To keep the game from devolving into constant weight recalculation, only check your encumbrance when outfitting your character or adding some serious weight to your stuff. Dropping a pack full of equipment should alter your encumbrance. The weight of spent arrows should not. Do count the decimals but round down your totals.

Muscle Point, Body, Fat, and Food. These four are all measured in pounds. **Muscle Point** is the weight of your character's muscle points, It can be any number from 10 to 20. Most use 15. Multiply that number by your muscle score and you get your **Body** weight in pounds, sans fat.

Fat is literally the pounds of fat your character is carrying on their body. Choose any amount. Most healthy characters carry about 10 pounds. Fat is fuel and you can burn it in an emergency to keep your character from starving to death. Fat should be treated like equipment. It will count against your encumbrance.

5.) Attacks

Attacks are mostly weapons and spells. Write one entry for each kind of weapon or spell you possess.

Name. Name is the name of the weapon plus any bonuses it might have such as the classic *Long Sword +1*. That +1 is a **Quality** bonus. It adds to your hit modifier but does not change your damage roll.

Hit. Hit comes from your Dexterity modifier plus any Class Bonus you might have with that kind of attack. Some weapons may carry a difficulty penalty. Spells automatically take a penalty equal to their spell level.

$$\text{Hit} = \text{Dex Mod} + \text{Class Bonus} - \text{Difficulty} + \text{Quality}.$$

The idea behind the hit modifier is that it combines all the permanent factors that will effect an attack so when you need it - most of the time - all you need to do is roll the dice and add your Hit mod.

Class Bonuses largely stick to **Melee** and **Ranged**. Ranged is for missile weapons. Melee is everything else: punches, kicks, daggers, swords, even a halberd. More targetted features such as Swords, Pole-Arms or Archery can only be used with a certain kind of attack. Realize that you only get one class bonus per attack, so use the best you have when more than one applies.

Damage. If the attack is muscle powered (Swords, Bows, Punches, but not a Crossbow) add your **Muscle** modifier to the weapon's **Damage** number and turn it into a die roll using the Damage Table below.

$$\text{DMG} = \text{Mus Mod} + \text{Damage}.$$

Be sure to include the letter that follows the damage number. A Broad Sword is a 9s. If you have Muscle +2, that turns it into an 11s which becomes a roll of 1d10+1s.

1:	1
2:	1d2
3:	1d2 + 1
4:	1d4
5:	1d4 + 1
6:	1d6
7:	1d6 + 1
8:	1d8
9:	1d8 + 1
10:	1d10

$$11: 1d_{10} + 1$$

$$12: 1d_{12}$$

$$13: 1d_{12} + 1$$

$$14: 1d_{10} + 1d_4$$

$$15: 1d_{10} + 1d_4 + 1$$

$$16: 1d_{10} + 1d_6$$

$$17: 1d_{10} + 1d_6 + 1$$

$$18: 1d_{10} + 1d_8$$

$$19: 1d_{10} + 1d_8 + 1$$

$$20: 1d_{20}$$

$$21: 1d_{20} + 1$$

$$22: 1d_{20} + 1d_2$$

$$23: 1d_{20} + 1d_2 + 1$$

$$24: 1d_{20} + 1d_4$$

$$25: 1d_{20} + 1d_4 + 1$$

$$26: 1d_{20} + 1d_6$$

$$27: 1d_{20} + 1d_6 + 1$$

$$28: 1d_{20} + 1d_8$$

$$29: 1d_{20} + 1d_8 + 1$$

$$30: 1d_{20} + 1d_{10}$$

$$31: 1d_{20} + 1d_{10} + 1$$

$$32: 1d_{20} + 1d_{12}$$

$$33: 1d_{20} + 1d_{12} + 1$$

$$34: 1d_{20} + 1d_{10} + 1d_4$$

$$35: 1d_{20} + 1d_{10} + 1d_4 + 1$$

$$36: 1d_{20} + 1d_{10} + 1d_6$$

$$37: 1d20 + 1d10 + 1d6 + 1$$

$$38: 1d20 + 1d10 + 1d8$$

$$39: 1d20 + 1d10 + 1d8 + 1$$

$$40: 2d20$$

$$41: 2d20 + 1$$

$$42: 2d20 + 1d2$$

$$43: 2d20 + 1d2 + 1$$

$$44: 2d20 + 1d4$$

$$45: 2d20 + 1d4 + 1$$

$$46: 2d20 + 1d6$$

$$47: 2d20 + 1d6 + 1$$

$$48: 2d20 + 1d8$$

$$49: 2d20 + 1d8 + 1$$

$$50: 2d20 + 1d10$$

$$51: 2d20 + 1d10 + 1$$

$$52: 2d20 + 1d12$$

$$53: 2d20 + 1d12 + 1$$

$$54: 2d20 + 1d10 + 1d4$$

$$55: 2d20 + 1d10 + 1d4 + 1$$

$$56: 2d20 + 1d10 + 1d6$$

$$57: 2d20 + 1d10 + 1d6 + 1$$

$$58: 2d20 + 1d10 + 1d8$$

$$59: 2d20 + 1d10 + 1d8 + 1$$

$$60: 3d20$$

$$61: 3d20 + 1$$

$$62: 3d20 + 1d2$$

$$63: 3d20 + 1d2 + 1$$

$$64: 3d20 + 1d4$$

$$65: 3d20 + 1d4 + 1$$

$$66: 3d20 + 1d6$$

$$67: 3d20 + 1d6 + 1$$

$$68: 3d20 + 1d8$$

$$69: 3d20 + 1d8 + 1$$

$$70: 3d20 + 1d10$$

$$71: 3d20 + 1d10 + 1$$

$$72: 3d20 + 1d12$$

$$73: 3d20 + 1d12 + 1$$

$$74: 3d20 + 1d10 + 1d4$$

$$75: 3d20 + 1d10 + 1d4 + 1$$

$$76: 3d20 + 1d10 + 1d6$$

$$77: 3d20 + 1d10 + 1d6 + 1$$

$$78: 3d20 + 1d10 + 1d8$$

$$79: 3d20 + 1d10 + 1d8 + 1$$

$$80: 4d20$$

$$81: 4d20 + 1$$

$$82: 4d20 + 1d2$$

$$83: 4d20 + 1d2 + 1$$

$$84: 4d20 + 1d4$$

$$85: 4d20 + 1d4 + 1$$

$$86: 4d20 + 1d6$$

$$87: 4d20 + 1d6 + 1$$

$$88: 4d20 + 1d8$$

$$89: 4d20 + 1d8 + 1$$

90: 4d20 + 1d10

91: 4d20 + 1d10 + 1

92: 4d20 + 1d12

93: 4d20 + 1d12 + 1

94: 4d20 + 1d10 + 1d4

95: 4d20 + 1d10 + 1d4 + 1

96: 4d20 + 1d10 + 1d6

97: 4d20 + 1d10 + 1d6 + 1

98: 4d20 + 1d10 + 1d8

99: 4d20 + 1d10 + 1d8 + 1

100: 1d100

Because very large rolls can take up a lot of space, we often substitute a comma for the "+ 1d" separating each die roll. This turns $2d20 + 1d10 + 1d4 + 1$ into a more compact $2d20,10,4+1$.

Note that any amount of damage can be turned into a die roll. If the damage value goes over 100, subtract 100 from it, find the roll for what remains, and tack a 1d100 onto the front.

The **d2** is a die that doesn't actually exist. When called to roll one, roll everything else and add in the +1 if there is one. If the number you end up with is odd, add 1 point to it, if even add 2.

Aspects. Aspects are a number of descriptive tags that tell us how the weapon works. These you should be able to copy directly from the *Character Compendium*. An explanation of them can be found in *Adventure* under *Aspects*.

Ammo. If a weapon uses ammo, write that amount on a line below the weapon that uses it and use the space to keep track of it. If the weapon has the **Reload** aspect, that is the number of rounds that it takes to reload the weapon, otherwise it reloads every time you fire it.

6.) Spells

If your class does not use magic spells, skip this step. Otherwise your class level determines the maximum number of **Spell Levels** you can have in your head ready to cast. Add to this your **Intellect** modifier.

1:	1
2:	2
3:	4
4:	6
5:	9
6:	12
7:	16
8:	20
9:	25

So a first level wizard with a +3 Intellect can have 4 spell levels ready to cast. This could mean one 4th level spell, or a 3rd level spell and a 1st level spell, or four 1st level spells, or any combination where the spell levels add up to 4.

That table stops at level 9, but it can go on forever. You simply gain 5 additional spell levels for every class level past 9. Level 10 gives you 30, level 11 give you 35, and so on.

If the class says you start casting magic at a different level then treat that level as first. Rangers get magical powers starting at 7th level, so a 7th level ranger would get 1 spell level to work with, an 8th level ranger gets 2 spell levels, and so on.

Choosing Spells. Brand new characters get to choose the spells they want. Write them into your attacks like weapons. **Name** is the name of the spell. **Hit** combines your Magic modifier with your class Level Bonus but subtracts the Spell Level. **Damage** is only used with spells designed to do damage. **Aspects** you can copy straight from the *Character Compendium*.

$$\text{Hit} = \text{Magic Mod} + \text{Level Bonus} - \text{Spell Level}$$

Spell Books. Unlike the classic game, you do not forget a spell after casting it. You can cast a spell over and over until you fully fail at casting it. *Then you forget it.* We mark forgotten spells with an X in the column following its name.

Forgotten spells can be recalled but doing so takes **1 hour per spell level** of study in your spellbook. If you don't have the spellbook, or someone has removed the spell from it, you cannot recover the spell. This makes spellbooks incredibly important!

Guard yours with your life!!!

Spellbooks are limited in the number of spell levels they can hold. A normal spellbook holds 20 levels worth of spells. This could mean 20 first level spells, 10 second level spells, 4 fifth level spells or any combination adding up to 20. As you increase in level and can pack more spells between your ears you may find yourself having to buy a bigger spellbook to hold all of this written knowledge, or resort to carrying more than one spell book at a time. If you do, be sure to keep track of what spells are in which book.

Swapping Spells. You can carry more spells in your spellbook than you can keep in your head. You can also intentionally forget spells to make room for others. While forgetting a spell takes no time at all, it takes **1 hour per spell level** of study to swap in a new spell.

Divine Magic. While divine or “clerical” magic is made of the same stuff as arcane magic, it works very differently. Clerics do not use spellbooks. Clerics pray for spells and the divine forces deliver. They can pray for any spell imaginable but if its type is not **Divine** they will take a -2 with it. Spell level limits still apply.

Like an arcane caster, divine casters will forget spells when they fail to cast them. It takes **1 hour per spell level** in prayer to either get the spell back or swap it out for something else.

Natural Casters. Natural casters are those characters and creatures who have a natural talent for making magic work. Gamewise, natural casters do not use spellbooks. They also cannot swap spells in and out of their head. What they cast are called powers and will be with them for life, *so choose wisely!*

When a natural caster fully fails to use a power it does get scrambled in their head. They can no longer use it until they spend at least **1 hour per spell level** in meditation, trying to unscramble it.

7.) Defense

AC/DC are dice rolls that protect you from taking damage. Dodge is a modifier used when trying to dodge an opponent in combat.

Armor Class. AC stands for **Armor Class** and is your main line of defense. It starts with the Armor value of whatever you are wearing. If any of this bears a bonus, such as a Shield +2, add the bonus to it. Next add your Dexterity modifier but ignore it if it's a penalty. If your class mentions **AC** add your level bonus. Finally, use the damage table from *Step 5* to turn it into a die roll.

$$\text{AC} = \text{Armor} + \text{Dex Bonus} + \text{Level Bonus}.$$

Down Class. DC is called **Down Class** because it is what you use when caught with your guard down, often by a surprise or back attack. DC comes from your Armor value sans Shield. Shields do not count since they only protect the front of your character and only when raised. Use the damage table to turn it into a die roll.

$$\text{DC} = \text{Armor} - \text{Shield}.$$

Dodge. Dodge comes from your **Dexterity** plus any **Level Bonus** you might get from a class mentioning Dodge as a feature. Unlike AC it uses your whole dexterity modifier, not just a bonus. For more on how Dodge works see its entry in *Adventure*.

$$\text{Dodge} = \text{Dex Modifier} + \text{Level Bonus}.$$

8.) Movement

Classes often come with different forms of movement with multipliers attached to them, like **Walk x1**. To turn this into a movement speed you need to find your

character's Base Speed. Add your **Muscle** to your **Dexterity**, divide by **2** and find it on this table. **SPR** stands for *Steps Per Round* and is equal to *Miles Per Hour*:

30: 10 SPR
27: 9 SPR
24: 8 SPR
21: 7 SPR
18: 6 SPR
15: 5 SPR
12: 4 SPR
9: 3 SPR
6: 2 SPR
3: 1 SPR

Multiply the base speed by the form of movement, round down and that is your movement speed. A Dwarf with a base speed of 4 and Walk x .75 would end up with Walk 3. If you round down to zero you still get a speed of 1.

Locomotion. If you were wondering about the game's major forms of movement, **Walk** and **Swim** are self-explanatory. **Climb** means you can climb like a monkey. **Cling** means you can climb and even go upside down like a spider or gecko. **Fly** propels you through the air. **Glide** lets you to float to the ground unless carried aloft by a strong gust of wind. **Hover** means you can somehow float a few feet off the ground but cannot actually fly. **Dig** lets you tunnel through the ground without using tools. **Hop** moves like a frog or kangaroo, springing forward as needed.

9.) Languages

To find what you speak, compare your **Intellect** to the following table. An additional language is learned with every 2 points above 18. So a character with Intellect 10 gets to speak Common and one other language. A character with Intellect 20 gets to speak Common and 6 other languages. Write what you choose beneath your class features list.

18: Common + 5 languages.
16: Common + 4 languages.
14: Common + 3 languages.
12: Common + 2 languages.
10: Common + 1 language.
8: Common only.
6: Crude Common only.
4: Grunts, snorts and an occasional word of Common.
1: Grunts and snorts.

Common. Common is the language of trade and usually the most common language spoken in any area. In some isolated places, such as dwarven mines and

elven kingdoms, it may be replaced by a more native tongue such as Dwarvish or Elvish, turning Common into an extra language to be learned.

Fantasy Languages. While regional languages will change from place to place – *ask your DM* - the following languages exist in most fantasy worlds.

Chaos: the secret language of the forces of Chaos.

Dwarvish: the chant-like grunting of dwarves.

Elvish: the high lilting sing-speak of elves.

Gnomish: the gribber-gnabber-gnargon of gnomes.

Goblin: the screech of goblins and other subhumanoids.

Law: the secret language of the forces of Law.

Reptilian: the susurrus of the reptile people.

Read & Write. All characters start as functionally illiterate and only able to read simple things like signs and menus unless they spend a language on **Read & Write**. Once possessed, the character may read and write any language they speak.

Read Magic. **Read Magic** is essential for characters who cast arcane magic, it allows them to make sense of what has been written in a spellbook. **Read & Write** needs to be learned before **Read Magic** can be had.

Sign Language. Sign language, the ability to speak with hand gestures, is often thought of as a way to assist the deaf. However it is also quite popular among Fighters, Rogues and anyone else who might want to communicate in perfect silence.

Law & Chaos. Lowercase law and chaos are alignments. Uppercase Law and Chaos are secret clandestine organizations determined to rule the world. Speaking one of these two languages in public can get you in a load of hot water, as in dunked in a boiling kettle of it until you scream.

10.) Climate

Climates are zones of temperature. One of these you need to pick as your **Climate**, the temperature your character would be most comfortable at while wearing nothing. The numbers are in degrees Fahrenheit and only there as an example. You don't need the numbers, just the climate name.

110: Torrid

90: Tropical

70: Warm

50: Temperate

30: Cold

10: Frigid

-10: Arctic

Warmth. Clothing helps a character stay warm. Gamewise, any equipment bearing the **W** aspect or a *Warmth Number* will help you do this. Add them together and every **10 points of warmth** will shift your character one climate downwards.

So Steel Plate (w14), a Great Helm (w4), Leather Boots (w2), Winter Gloves (w5) and Long Underwear (w6) provide a total warmth of 31. That's a three zone shift. Enough to turn Temperate into Arctic. Remove the long underwear and warmth drops to 25 turning Temperate into Frigid.

Cooling. Far more rare but not unheard of are magical items designed to cool a character down. These have a **C** number which subtracts from your total warmth.

Adjusted. Be sure to write your Adjusted climate next to your total Warmth. Climate is rarely used during Dungeon Adventures, but it is no laughing matter once you get into Wilderness Adventures.

11.) Personality

A character's personality is the face they show the world. It appears in the way they talk, the way they dress, how they act and the company they keep.

Alignment. Alignment is the heart of personality as it describes how your character is inclined to act in any given situation; however, it is no guarantee of action. Choose one of the following and put its two letter code as the first part of your personality.

- LG = Lawful Good
- LN = Lawful Neutral
- LE = Lawful Evil
- NG = Neutral Good
- TN = True Neutral
- NE = Neutral Evil
- CG = Chaotic Good
- CN = Chaotic Neutral
- CE = Chaotic Evil

Lawful characters like to be seen as proud members of society, honorable, trustworthy and dependable. They do what is right, just as long as it doesn't go against the laws of the land.

Chaotic characters seek freedom, anarchy, fun. Nobody gets to tell them what to do! They care little for what society thinks, outside of their small group of friends of course.

Good characters are friendly, harmless, charitable, selfless.

Evil characters tend to be menacing, brutal and self-absorbed.

Neutral can almost be replaced by the word Pure. A Neutral Good character is a purely good character. They couldn't care less about law and chaos just as long as everything is good.

True Neutral is a mild wild card whose ambivalence could go in any direction, just as long as it doesn't go too far.

Social / True. Some characters have two alignments separated by a slash such as LG/CG. The first is the character's **social alignment**. This is how they want to be known, the reputation they seek to uphold. The second is their **true alignment**. That is what comes out when their guard is down. Characters who are the same inside and out will have just one alignment.

Good vs Evil. While you can play any character imaginable, it is a good idea to choose a true alignment that works with the alignments of the other characters in your party. There are divine forces at work and they can be sticklers about the whole matter of Good vs Evil.

Personality Traits. Personality traits are a handful of descriptive terms that help describe your character. For a quick personality, pick **1 positive trait**, **1 neutral trait**, and **1 negative trait** from the list of personality traits at the back of the *Character Compendium*. Combine your alignment and personality traits and write them into the space above your class features list.

Images. For the artistically inclined, there is space on the back of the sheet for a character portrait. *Why the back?* So you can flip it up to show other players what your character looks like.

Backgrounds? Keep in mind that this is an old school game. Characters often don't have backgrounds. Sometimes they don't last long enough to have foregrounds. It is best to hold off on creating your character's image and background until you know the character will be sticking around for a while.

Existence. Existence is your character in a nutshell. It is typically made of your level and class, but it can be anything that quickly identifies your character. Existence goes on the second line from the top of the sheet.

A Name. Hopefully by now an idea of the character has coalesced in your mind. Give it a name to sum it all up. If you can't think of anything go with a working title (ex: My Fighter) until a spark of inspiration comes along. Write it on the very top line of your character sheet.

[Sample Sheet]

Experience Points

Traditionally all characters start at 1st level with zero experience points and gain them through adventuring. A first level warlord who has earned 2,000 XP instantly turns into a second level warlord. The amounts needed to change levels vary from class to class until 1,000,000 points is reached. After that each new level requires another million points. Warlords reach 1,000,000 at 11th level so 12th level is 2,000,000 points, 13th level is 3,000,000 points, 25th level is 15,000,000 points, and so on into infinity.

Starting Level. If you are playing an adventure with a level limit, such as *Character Levels 4 to 6*, your new character may start at the lowest level of that range. In this case, level 4. For experience points you start with the bare minimum needed to reach it. A 4th level warlord would start with 8,000 XP.

Ability Scores. You may also spend XP on increasing your ability scores. Unlike class levels, ability score increases top out at +12. The cost of what you want to add to your scores are:

+1	=	1,000
+2	=	2,000
+3	=	4,000
+4	=	8,000
+5	=	16,000
+6	=	32,000
+7	=	64,000
+8	=	125,000
+9	=	250,000
+10	=	500,000
+11	=	1,000,000
+12	=	2,000,000

So if you rolled an Int 8 and want to increase it to Int 9 that +1 will cost you 1000 XP. Increasing it to Int 10 will cost another 1000 XP. Taking it to Int 11 adds 2000 XP for a total of 4000 XP invested in intellect. On the back of your sheet you would write *Intellect +3: 4000 XP*.

The score you are modifying does not matter. It takes 4000 XP to turn an Int 8 into an Int 11 as well as an Int 14 into an Int 17.

Character Level. The level mentioned in your character's existence is often your class level because most people dump all their XP into a class and nothing else. If you have spent XP on ability scores or multi-classing (see *Multi-Classing in Adventure*), add up the total amount of XP spent and compare it to the table below. This will give you your Character Level which is what we should really be using to match characters to adventures. Every level past 11th is another million points so two million is 12th level, three million is 13th level, and so on.

1	=	0
2	=	2,000
3	=	4,000
4	=	8,000
5	=	16,000
6	=	32,000
7	=	64,000
8	=	120,000
9	=	250,000
10	=	500,000
11	=	1,000,000

So if your character is a 5th level Rogue and a 3rd level Wizard who has spent 20,000 and 6,000 on them respectively as well as 8,000 on ability score increases? That is 34,000 XP total and makes for a *6th level Rogue / Wizard*.

Gaining XP. The easiest way to gain XP is to remember that you get 1 XP for every 1 HP of damage you recover, be it through natural or magical means. These we often call **Effort Points**. There is space for keeping track of them on the second page of the character sheet pdf.

Aside from that, many classes have very specific ways in which a character can gain XP. Most involve exchanging treasure for XP. Clerics receive 1 XP for every 1 CP they give to their church. Timewise, a character can never gain more than **30 XP per day** from their class. Should a cleric donate \$900 to their church it will take at least a month for those 900 XP to trickle in.

ACTION

The game begins. The DM tells you what kind of a mess your characters have gotten themselves into and you – *the Dragonhead Bangers* – carry it forward from there. You tell the DM what your characters are doing. You speak on your character's behalf. If it all sounds doable you just do it. *You sneak down the corridor. You look around the crypt. You try to decipher the glyphs on the stone sarcophagus.*

Ability. When the outcome seems uncertain, such as when deciphering glyphs on a stone sarcophagus, the DM will ask you for an **Ability Check** saying something along the lines of "give me a Hard Intellect check." We are checking to see if your character can do all that you asking of them.

Difficulty. Hard & Easy is a general statement of **Difficulty**. It comes from the DM thinking about what is going on and just how hard or easy it all seems. It also lets us talk in numbers without having the mention any. Each Hard is a -2. Every Easy is a +2. Add this to your ability modifier.

Triple Hard = -6

Double Hard = -4

Hard = -2

Easy = +2

Double Easy = +4

Triple Easy = +6

While there is no limit to just how hard or easy an action can be, rarely does it go past +/-6.

Level Bonus. If your class seems like something that should help you do whatever you are trying to do – such as a Cleric or Wizard trying to decipher glyphs – bring it up. The DM may let you add your level bonus to the check. If it seems like a bit of a stretch (*my Rogue can read those!*) then you might get half a level bonus. If it seems implausible you get nothing.

Your **Level Bonus** is your class level turned into a bonus, so a 3rd level Wizard would get a +3. A **Half Bonus** is that same bonus cut in half and rounded down, in this case a +1.

Other Modifiers. There may be other modifiers brought in by the game. Hindrances are penalties brought on by things like drunkenness or trying to carry too much stuff. *These affect everything you do.* Quality Bonuses attached to pieces of equipment will affect any action made using that piece of equipment. On the whole, most checks boil down to three factors:

$$\text{Action} = \text{Ability} + \text{Difficulty} + \text{Level Bonus.}$$

Roll the Dice

Once you've finished with your modifiers it's time to roll the dice. What you roll depends on how badly you need to succeed. Choose one of the following. When in doubt, roll a 2d10.

Play It Safe = 3d6

Take A Chance = 2d10

Risk It All = 1d20

Criticals & Crashes. When the dice roll the best they can roll, that's a **Critical**. Roll the dice again and add it to your strength. When the dice roll nothing but 1's, that's a **Crash**. It doesn't matter what you end up with you automatically crash the check.

Try Hard. Characters are always trying to get things done but sometimes they need to try harder. Gamewise we do this by exchanging wear damage for extra dice. Tell the table you are trying hard, harder or your hardest, mark down the damage and roll all of your dice at once. Try hard dice do not contribute to criticals and crashes. You don't get to roll them again with a critical.

Try Hard = 1 Wear = 1d4

Try Harder = 2 Wear = 1d8

Try Hardest = 3 Wear = 1d12

Strength. Add your modifier to your dice roll and that is the **Strength** of your action. This is a measure of performance which we use with the following table to see how successful you were:

50:	9	=	Mind-Blowing
45:	8	=	Stellar
40:	7	=	Amazing
35:	6	=	Fantastic
30:	5	=	Incredible
25:	4	=	Excellent
20:	3	=	Terrific
15:	2	=	Great
10:	1	=	Average
5:	L	=	Little
0:	F	=	Failure
-1:	C	=	Crash

Success. The big numbers in five point increments are strengths. The smaller numbers are success counts. Most of the time all you need is a 10 to succeed with a single success. A 15 or better will give you 2 successes. A 20 or better means 3 successes. *Terrific!*

Failure. The lettered entries are failures. L is a Little Failure. You failed but not too badly. F is a Full Fail. Yeah you screwed up. C is a Crash. Not only do you fail but something terrible happens on top of it. A crash happens with any negative strength.

Action Tables. While the impact of a success can be guessed at, peppered around the game are various **Action** tables like this one which tells us how to handle diving for cover to avoid an explosion or breath weapon attack.

Diving For Cover **Dexterity or Luck**

- 5:** No Damage.
- 3:** Quarter Damage.
- 1:** Half Damage.
- L:** Full Damage
- F:** Double Damage.
- C:** Triple Damage.

First you get a title and the check to be made. In this case it's Dexterity or Luck, your choice. Following it is a threshold table of effects. The numbered entries are successes. 1 or 2 successes does half damage. 3 or 4 does quarter damage. A 5 or better does a no damage. L, F and C are failures. Failures only appear when they do something such as amplifying the damage you take by failing badly.

Merlins. *Don't like what you rolled?* If you have any of the gold coins known as Merlins you can spend one and make the roll again. This can be done up to **three times** per action. With every re-roll the previous roll is lost, so there is no going back to what you had before. Merlins can overturn a little or full failure but they cannot stop a crash.

Challenge

A challenge pits your performance against the opposition. Trying to cause something to happen puts you on **Offense**. Trying to stop the thing from happening puts you on **Defense**. Where the two collide we get a challenge often phrased as **Offense vs Defense**.

Offense vs Defense. *Muscle vs Dexterity, Magic vs Wisdom, Intellect vs Hard Spirit* are all challenges with the offense on the left and the defense on the right. With that last one a Hard has been tacked onto Spirit to make it even harder for the defender. When something is called an **Ability Challenge**, that means both sides check the same ability. A *Dexterity Challenge* is the same thing as a *Dexterity vs Dexterity*.

Another way to know you are dealing with a challenge is through the words **Beat & Defeat**. When called to beat a strength that puts you on offense. Defeating a strength puts you on defense.

Victory! Each side makes a check and the greater strength wins it. When this ends with a tie roll a **1d20**. An odd number wins it for the offense. An even one does it for the defense.

Defeat. It's good to note that being defeated is not the same thing as failure. Think of a wizard casting an illusion. This is a *Magic vs Wisdom* challenge. The Magic check determines the quality of the illusion. With a full failure nothing appears. With a little failure you get something that isn't going to fool anyone (is that a duck?) It's only with a 10 or better that you get a plausible illusion.

The challenge comes into play when other characters take a look at it. If an onlooker can defeat the strength of the illusion with a wisdom check they can tell it's a fake without having to touch it. If the illusion wins the onlooker will be fooled.

Competition

In a competition, everyone is on offense, everyone is checking the same ability to see who is best at it. Dice are rolled. Strengths are compared and the character creating the **greatest strength** wins it. With a tie, if the competition cannot end in a tie each competitor rolls a **1d20** and the highest roller wins by a hair.

Group Competitions. A group competition is like a tug-of-war with two or more groups competing against each other. Everyone on a side makes the same check and we count up the number of successes they produce. A little failure will not change the count, but a full failure removes 1 success from the total. A crash removes 2 successes. In the end, the side with the greatest number of successes wins it.

DM Fiat

While events involving the characters should follow the rules, outside of that anything can happen. A dragon and an efreet can fight for hours on end without a single die being rolled, yet the outcome is completely legit. *If the DM says it happens then it happens.* This is known as **DM Fiat**. Sometimes a DM just needs to cut some corners to keep the game running smoothly.

Group Rolls. One way the DM does this is with **Group Rolls**. When a bunch of creatures need to make a bunch of checks, the DM will roll once for the entire group. Or the DM may break the creatures up into separate groups and roll once for each group.

The Middle. Another technique is called taking the **Middle**. Instead of rolling for damage we use the middle of the roll. This is the best the dice could possibly roll, cut in half and rounded down.

If a hobgoblin rolls 1d8+1 for damage, the best possible roll is a 9. Cut in half is 4.5 which rounds down to 4. Instead of rolling the dice, the hobgoblin does 4 points of damage every time it attacks.

Taking the middle may not be the most fun way to play, but it helps immensely when 100 hobgoblins come crashing through the castle gates.

COMBAT

Combat is action constrained by time. It moves in **Rounds** each of which is just **three seconds** long. What can you do in a round? Anything you can imagine your character doing inside of three seconds. Most of the time you move and make an attack. This we call your **Action** for the round.

Declare!

There is no real attack order in combat. You go when it makes sense to. You do everything you want to do during the round all at once, starting with a declaration of that action.

Movement. When not using miniatures we mostly ignore movement. You say where you want to go and if it seems plausible you go there, otherwise you might need to make a muscle or dexterity check. If you plan on using miniatures, be sure to read *Miniatures* in *Adventure* for rules on how to use them.

One Attack Per Round. Everyone gets one attack per round. A character wielding a sword gets to use it once, as can a character with sword and shield, or a character with a two-handed sword, or a character casting a spell.

Two-Fisted Fighting. One exception to this is called *two-fisted fighting*, and comes from a character attacking with a weapon in each hand. Roll to hit once and use the same number for both of attacks. Damage is rolled separately and the two are treated like separate attacks as far as AC/DC is concerned.

The weapons that can be used for two-fisted fighting need to be one-handed, and their damage values should add up to 14 or less. When they don't a Hit -2 will be taken by each.

So two hand axes or short swords (6 & 6) will work together well, as does a dagger and a long sword (4 & 8), but using two long swords (8 & 8) will cause both swords to take a Hit -2.

Shields. The arm you have holding a shield cannot do anything except wield the shield to defend the character. If used as a weapon you cannot use the shield to defend yourself and it falls under the domain of two-fisted fighting.

Kicks. You don't use your hands to make a kick, but you do use your whole body. Unless something says otherwise, if you make a kick that is your one attack for the round.

Speed!

But who goes first? The answer is whoever is first to open their mouth and tell the table what they are doing. *Who strikes first* is a different matter.

Who Strikes First? When attacked and you haven't gone yet you may retaliate and it's assumed that you are trying to strike your opponent before they hit you. You and your opponent should make your hit rolls and whoever produces the **greatest strength strikes first**. When two-fisted fighting with weapons that produce different hit strengths, use the lower strength to represent the entire attack.

Simultaneous Strikes. When hit strengths tie a simultaneous strike occurs. Both combatants hit each other at the same time, neither striking fast enough to knock the other out before they can make their attack.

Reach & Range. One exception to all of this is the matter of distance. Without good reason, weapons and attacks that can strike from a distance will hit before those that cannot. Unless you are right on top of each other, a crossbow will strike before a spear and a spear will strike before a dagger.

Attack!

Roll the dice and add the attack's hit modifier as well as any other modifiers which might apply. Try Hard is an option. When two-fisted fighting you only need to try hard once and both attacks get it.

Fail and the attack misses.

Succeed and roll for damage.

The success of the attack multiplies the damage done. Score three successes and you do triple your damage roll.

Damage Type. Be sure to tell the table the amount of damage done and its damage type. This is what the letter behind the damage roll is all about.

p = piercing

s = sharp

m = mixed

b = blunt

i = impact

So if your attack did 12 points of sharp damage you would tell the table, "take 12 points of sharp damage" or simply "12 sharp" if brevity is your thing.

Sweep Attacks. An attack is not a single swing of your sword. It's everything you do with that sword during the round to make it do as much damage as possible. Roll up enough damage and you may divide it amongst your opponents with a **Sweep Attack**.

So if goblins have crowded around you and your sword rolls up 12 points of damage? You can sweep them and hit two goblins for 6 points of damage, or three for 4 points a piece, or two for 3 and one for 6, or any combination that adds up to 12.

The sweep does need to make sense. All of your opponents need to have been within your reach while you were moving during that round. Ranged attacks can make sweep attacks, but you lose 1 piece of ammo per opponent and the attack itself cannot have a reload time. So the bow & arrow can make sweep attacks but not a crossbow or sling.

Defend!

When hit by some damage, roll your AC and subtract it. Unless the attack is a surprise attack or back attack, in which case you use DC. Anything left over should be taken as damage.

Middle. Because sometimes the sky above you blackens with arrows and we don't have all night, if you want to skip rolling multiple times for AC/DC feel free to use its middle instead. That is the best the dice could roll, cut in half and rounded down.

Sacrificing Armor. When AC/DC falls short of protecting your character, you may voluntarily take a -1 in armor damage to both AC and DC in exchange for **1d12** points of added protection.

So if an orc hits you for 16 points of damage and your AC rolls a 9? That is going to leave you with 7 points of damage. Tell the table, "I sacrifice my armor" and roll 1d12. If a 5 turns up you only take 2 points of damage but both your AC and DC will be reduced by one point against future attacks.

Write armor damage beside the AC/DC rolls on your sheet. Keep in mind that you can only reduce your AC/DC until your armor runs out. You cannot sacrifice a Dex or Level Bonus.

Damage!

If AC/DC stops the damage, the attack is over and we move onto the next one. Otherwise record what is left on your character sheet. Damage comes in two forms, Wear and Tear.

Wear. Wear damage is exhaustion. This is your character reeling from the blow. Mark the damage with a **horizontal** line through that many hit point circles on your sheet. A Sharp pencil a line through six hit points.

Tear. Tear damage is actual physical damage. Slash these **vertically** through your hit points. What you take depends on the attack's damage type and the ratios on your character sheet. Most will use:

Pierce = 1 tear for every **1** point of wear.

Sharp = 1 tear for every **2** points of wear.

Mixed = 1 tear for every **3** points of wear.

Blunt = 1 tear for every **4** points of wear.

Impact = 1 tear for every **6** points of wear.

None = 1 tear for every **10** points of wear.

So a blow doing 6 sharp would do 3 tears of damage, aka 1 tear for every 2 points of wear. Had it been a mixed attack it would only do 2 tears of damage. A blunt or impact attack does just 1 tear of damage. A piercing attack would do 6 tears of damage.

None is an unofficial damage type. It's what you use when no damage type is mentioned. None is always equal to 1 tear per 10 points of wear.

Scar Damage. Scar damage often comes from acidic and necrotic attacks. Instead of slashing in tear damage you **blacken** the hit point circles. Only magic can heal a scarred hit point and not very easily at that.

Unconsciousness. When your wear damage reaches the letter D your character will be knocked unconscious. *Keep recording it!* Your character will only wake up after all of that excess damage has been recovered as well as 1 hit point before the D.

Death. Once your tear damage reaches the letter D you are dead. It's time to get out the dice and roll up a new character. The DM will find some way to pop you back in the game as soon as possible.

Battles

When a fight is small, a crazy fracas with everyone attacking all at once is fine, but as the number of combatants increases it can grow unwieldy. A **Battle** is a form of combat where we divide into warring sides. There is no comparing of hit strengths to see who strikes first. Instead the combat proceeds **side by side** with each side doing everything they will do for the round before the other side gets to go.

Roll For Initiative. Before the battle begins, each side presents a leader who enters a **Charisma Competition** to see who commands the battlefield. This is what Dragonhead means by *Rolling for Initiative*. The leaders don't actually talk to each other. Instead, charisma is checked to see who has the best command over their crew. The winning side goes first.

When your side is given the chance to go, who goes first does not matter. Work as a team and resolve your actions when it seems right to do so. Just be sure to make

your entire action all at once. This makes it easier to keep track of who has gone and who has yet to go.

A Break in the Battle. Side by side, round after round, the battle continues with the winners of initiative going first and the losers going second until we get to a round where no one on either side attacks. There the battle breaks. Should it suddenly re-ignite initiative should be rolled again to see who goes first.

Lost Leaders. When one side's leader is knocked unconscious or is in some way incapacitated a new leader will need to step up and take command. If no one is willing then that side must surrender or flee.

The new leader should roll for initiative and compare it to the strength that the other side rolled when the battle began. If that number has been forgotten the other side should re-roll initiative as well.

Encounters

No matter how long a fight actually lasts, it always lasts one **Encounter**. An encounter is a very flexible unit of time lasting as long as it needs to, up to ten minutes. If a spell says it lasts for one encounter? That means it will last until the fight is over or ten minutes have passed for the characters in the game.

Every round of combat represents **three seconds** of time so it will be incredibly rare for an encounter to last more than a minute let alone ten of them yet a line does need to be drawn somewhere.

DUNGEON CRAWLING

A Dungeon is any enclosed area the DM has prepared for you to adventure in - a decrepit castle, lost caverns, a haunted forest - any threatening area where you might not want to linger for too long.

In the days of yore, someone at the table would be dubbed the party mapper, given a pad of graph paper and tasked with drawing out a map of the dungeon. A large chunk of the game was spent listening to the DM tell the mapper what to draw as the party wormed its way through the dungeon complex.

This put the crawl into Dungeon Crawling.

Ghost Maps. Instead of a mapper, Dragonhead uses a **Leader**. This player should be given a **Ghost Map**, essentially an outline of the DM's map but with all the secrets left out. With a ghost map there is no drawing required unless you come upon some hidden rooms that need to be scribbled in. Ghost maps are disposable so feel free to write on yours, draw on it or even color it in.

The party leader should also be given a pawn to represent the party in the dungeon. A rubber eraser stolen from a mechanical pencil works well. Mapping now becomes a matter of moving the pawn from square to square on the map as you progress through the dungeon.

Yes, this will give the party more information than they have any right to know, but that's the trade off for not having to deal with an actual mapper.

Marching Order. Even if you are not using miniatures, one of the first things you should do is assemble a marching order to show who is in the **front** of the group, who is in the **middle** and who is guarding its **rear**. With miniatures you simply line them up. Without miniatures try writing the character names on a sheet of paper.

The Crawl. A **Crawl** is a length of time equal to **10 rounds** of game time, aka 30 seconds for the characters in the game. It is the amount of time you have to move with before the DM rolls for a **Random Encounter**.

So the general pace of a dungeon crawl is a back and forth between the party leader moving the pawn a certain number of squares, the DM rolling to see if an encounter happens, the leader moving the pawn again, and the DM making yet another encounter roll.

An encounter doesn't happen every time the DM rolls the dice, but when one does we stop the crawl to handle it. Once the encounter is over a new crawl begins and we continue moving through the dungeon.

Crawl Speed. The number of squares a party can move depends on the speed of its **slowest member**. Multiply that by **10** for the ten rounds which make up a crawl and divide by **3** for the number of steps each square on a map represents.

$$\text{Crawl Speed} = (\text{Speed} \times \text{Time}) / \text{Scale}.$$

So if your slowest party member has a walk speed of 4 then $4 \times 10 = 40$. Divide by 3, round down and ($40 / 3 = 13$) the party can move 13 squares between random encounter checks.

If you don't have a calculator handy, the following slowest party speeds will give you the number of squares per crawl the party can make with a standard 10' square map:

- Walk 1 = 3 squares per crawl
- Walk 2 = 6 squares per crawl
- Walk 3 = 10 squares per crawl
- Walk 4 = 13 squares per crawl
- Walk 5 = 16 squares per crawl
- Walk 6 = 20 squares per crawl
- Walk 7 = 23 squares per crawl
- Walk 8 = 26 squares per crawl

Running. Slow characters can Run to speed up the party. This doubles the character's movement speed but brings a **-2** to every check they make during the crawl.

Diagonals. When moving through a map laid out on a grid, you can move diagonally but it will cost you **2 squares** of movement. If you don't have it you cannot move diagonally.

Searching. To search an area you are crawling through, announce you are doing so, cut the party speed by **half**, and have each party member make a **Wisdom** check. Should someone in the party beat the **Secret** strength of whatever has been hidden there they will take notice of it. Otherwise they notice nothing. It doesn't matter how many hidden items are in the area, if your wisdom beats its strength the item will be revealed.

Rooms. A room is any area with a specific encounter in it. The cave complex may have lizard men randomly roaming through it, but enter the big cavern with a fire pit? The one wafting with the sweet stink of roasting goblin? *No dice are rolled.* Enter it and you will find lizard men there. *Hopefully, they just finished eating.*

Rooms should be treated like a random encounter that amounts to something. The current crawl ends. The encounter is handled. When finished a new crawl begins.

Creature Encounters. When the DM rolls a random encounter it will not always be with a creature. A wind may roar through the corridor threatening to blow out your torches. The ghosts of past adventurers may fill the hallway, replaying the battle where they finally fell. Most of the time, however, you will encounter a creature of some sort.

If it is not obvious where the creature is coming from roll **1d12** with the table below to find its direction relative to the party. When left and right are not options roll a **1d6** instead. When dealing with a 3-way intersection roll a **1d8** where 7 or 8 is the third direction.

10: Right +0.

7 : Left +0.

4 : Before +2.

1 : Behind -2.

Next roll **1d6** and add the modifier. This is the number of 10' squares the monster will be away from the party when the encounter begins. At one square or less the creature may launch a **Surprise Attack**, wisdom providing (see *Surprise Attacks* in *Adventure*).

Reaction Rolls. Most creatures will see the characters as invaders of their lair and automatically attack. If there is a reason not to attack the DM may call for a Reaction roll. This is a **Charisma** check that should be made by either the leader of the party or the first character to open their mouth and try to talk to the creature. Obvious alignment differences or an inability to speak the same language will harden this check.

Reaction Charisma

3: Ecstatic.

2: Friendly.

1: Indifferent.

L: Attack.

F: Destroy.

Ecstatic means that the creature is enamored of you, willing to bend rules for you, but nothing crazy or suicidal. **Friendly** means the creature thinks you're pretty cool. Don't ask for too much and you might just get it. **Indifferent** creatures do not care one way or another. You can walk away unharmed if you do so quickly. **Attack** means something about you really ticked the creature off and now it is attacking. **Destroy?** The creature is not only attacking but has made your destruction its life purpose.

Illumination. Sources of Illumination come with a **Light** aspect to tell us the number of squares it will illuminate beyond the square the party is in. A torch with Light 3 will illuminate the square the party is in and three squares in every direction beyond it.

Illuminate is a tricky word. It means the party will be able to see what is there. Beyond the light the characters may still be able to see things moving through the darkness but have no idea what they are. Meanwhile, creatures off in the shadows will be able to see the illumination coming from a long ways away.

Resting. You may rest in a dungeon to recover some damage but doing so requires **2 crawls** spent in an undisturbed location with no party movement (see *Rest & Sleep* in *Adventure*). Often the best way to do this is to hold up in a room and barricade the door.

The DM will still make one random encounter roll per crawl. If a creature results, it will try to enter the room and wait outside if unable. When there is more than one door on the room, use the table below to see which door it tries to come through.

2 Doors, roll **1d6**. **1**: 1st. **4**: 2nd.

3 Doors, roll **1d6**. **1**: 1st. **3**: 2nd. **5**: 3rd.

4 Doors, roll **1d8**. **1**: 1st. **3**: 2nd. **5**: 3rd. **7**: 4th.

5 Doors, roll **1d10**. **1**: 1st. **3**: 2nd. **5**: 3rd. **7**: 4th. **9**: 5th.

Doors

Doors in a dungeon crawl often come with a number of stats kept in parenthesis such as **Thick Hidden Locked Door** (*break 14, secret 15, locked 18, hear 12*).

Break. Break is what you need to beat with a **Muscle** check to demolish the door. Characters can combine their strengths by hitting the door at the same time. However this calls for a **Hard Muscle** check and only two characters can do it against a normal-sized door. For more than two you will need a battering ram which does the same thing but lets more than two characters combine their strengths. Some common break points for doors are:

Light Door = **break 10**. Something you might find inside a house.

Medium Door = **break 20**. The door you might find on the front of a house or a room inside a fortress.

Heavy Door = **break 40**. The door you might find entering a fortress or prison cell.

X-Heavy Door = **break 80**. The fortified entrance to a fortress or vault.

When it makes sense, certain attacks (think swords and axes compared to daggers, spears or arrows) can be used to break down a door. It take **10 points** of hit point damage to destroy 1 point of break strength.

Secret. Secret doors come with the word Secret and a strength to beat with a **Wisdom** check to detect it. When dungeon crawling just one wisdom check needs to be made to check an entire area for both traps and secret doors.

Locked. Locked doors have a Lock Strength that needs to be beaten by a **Dexterity** check to pick open. You don't have to be a Rogue to pick a lock but you do need a set of lock picks. Timewise it takes **1d6** rounds to attempt a lock pick.

Hear. Hear is the strength to beat with a **Wisdom** check when trying to listen through a door. One success allows you to hear muffled sounds through the door. With two successes or more you can make out what they are.

Traps

Where there is treasure there will often be traps. Most are mechanical traps such as pendulum blades, spring-fired spears or trip-wire crossbows hidden in the walls. Like a door they will come with a description followed by a number of stats in parenthesis like **Pendulum Blade** (secret 14, hit 14, dmg 1d12s).

Checking For Traps. Parties check for traps and secret doors at the same time while crawling through a dungeon. This **slows** their speed by **half**. Each character makes a **Wisdom** check and if they beat a trap's secret strength they detect it without setting it off.

The Trap Springs! If no one checks for traps or the trap is not detected, everyone in the party should make a **Luck** check. Whoever rolls the **lowest strength** will be attacked by the trap and use DC against it.

Pit Traps. Against an undetected pit trap everyone should make a **Dexterity** check. Anyone who fails it will be sucked into the pit. The length of the fall determines the damage done. A 10' deep pit does 1d10 damage. Damage type is determined by what is in the bottom of the pit, blunt for just a floor, piercing for spikes. DC only **half** protects against pit traps.

Disabling a Trap. Once a trap is detected it can be easily avoided. Disabling one calls for an **Intellect** check. A little fail cause the disabler to be caught in it and unable to move away without setting it off. A full fail will fire it on the disabler.

Describe What You Are Doing. On the whole, when it comes to traps the last things you want is to trust the dice. If you talk it over with the DM and truly interact with the place where a trap is present, the DM might give you an easier roll or even let you detect and disable the trap without having to roll the dice.

ADVENTURE

By now you should have a good idea of how the game is played. On the whole, we like to leave as much to the imagination as possible, but there are a few situations which do well with some additional definition. That is what the Adventure section is for.

As has been said before and cannot be said enough – *you do not need to know every rule to play the game* – just a general understanding of how Dragonhead is played and a willingness to look things up or make things up when needed.

No Do-Overs. With this said, keep in mind that the game only moves forward. If you suddenly realize that you could have used *Cover* and it might have caused the battle to go differently? *No, we cannot go back and do it again.* Just try to remember it for next time. Through hindsight is how much of this is learned.

The same goes for the Dragonhead approach to the rules in general. If you honestly forget something and no one notices then the game moves onward. You are not playing it wrong, just not as well as it could be played.

Age

All mortal things age. They don't always age at the same rate but they do go through the same stages: Infant, Child, Young, Adult, Mature, Old and Elderly. Young being short for Young Adult, aka a teenager. If nothing has been said, all characters are Adults by default.

Age stages effect a character by changing its ability scores. The following table is what you need to go from being an Adult to some other stage of life.

Adult	Mature	Old	Elderly
+0	-2	-4	-6
+0	-2	-4	-6
+0	-1	-2	-4
+0	+1	+2	+2
+0	+0	+0	+0
+0	+1	+2	+4

Age & Wisdom. Wisdom is a combination of Perception and Intuition. As a child the senses are sharp and quick but they dull as one grows older. With intuition the reverse is true. Children don't have much life experience so they are not as good as adults when it comes to predicting things. The end result is a balance that keeps Wisdom at +0 from beginning to end.

Metaphysical Abilities? They don't age! Spirit, Magic and Luck remain constant across the entirety of a life.

Immortal? Some characters and creatures are immortal. This doesn't mean they cannot die. It means they reach a stage in life where for one reason or another they just stop aging. At that age they will stay as long as they continue to live.

Area Attacks

An area attack floods a space with damage, such as by dragon's breath or a wizard's fireball. Gamewise, anyone caught in that area will be hit by the same amount of damage.

Area Shapes. Areas come in different shapes identified by a term such as Cone or Wall. When looking down from above...

Blast = a full circle.

Stream = a 15 degree angle.

Cone = a 45 degree angle.

Funnel = a 90 degree angle.

Curve = a 180 degree angle.

Pour = a 270 degree angle.

Cloud = a projected full circle.

Dome = a bell jar or bubble.

Cube = a full square.

Torus = a full circle with a missing core.

[image]

Area Size. Attached to the shape is its **size** or **blast radius**. This is the number of **steps** the area radiates out from the step it was detonated in. For example:

0: Dinky.

1: Small.

3: Medium.

6: Large.

12: Big.

24: Huge.

An explosion with Blast 0 is like a firecracker. It will hit anything occupying the same step as itself. A Blast 1 will hit step zero as well as every step adjacent to it. Blast 3 hits step zero and everything three steps away from it, and so on.

Area attacks that are created on the spot, such as a wizard's fireball, can be expanded trading a Hit -1 for each extra 1 step of radius. Streams and Cones get 2 extra steps per Hit -1.

Stream. When using miniatures, a streaming attack shoots forward in a line, hitting everything it crosses paths with. When not using miniatures a streaming attack can hit **2 different targets per success** as long as they are standing in a relatively straight path.

Cone, Funnel, Curve, and Pour. With these step zero is always the step directly in front of the character creating it. They attack like dragon's breath, hitting an ever-widening area the farther they fan out.

Cloud. A cloud attack is a full circle explosion except that instead of billowing out around the point of detonation this one projects one length of its radius forward and billows out around that point. Doing so protects whatever created the cloud from being hit by it.

Cube. A cube forms a square space around its point of detonation, one which is as high, wide and deep as its size. A cube 3 would have 3x3x3 as its dimensions (length x width x depth) with step zero sitting at its center.

Often cubes can be scrunched to make different shapes, moving steps from one dimension to another. A Cube 3 could be squeezed to make a wall at 4x4x1 or flattened into a beam with 1x1x7, just as long as the three dimensions add up to **triple** the cube's size in steps. On the whole, no dimension of a cube can be squished to less than **one step**.

Dome. A dome is essentially a sphere whose sides drape to the ground. It covers everything as tall as the sphere as well as standing in the circle it makes on the ground. It even covers the ground beneath the feet of those who are inside it.

Torus. A torus is essentially a giant doughnut. It goes off like a blast but will leave the step zero unharmed. This core can be widened without penalty but doing so does not increase the overall size of the blast.

Aspects

Aspects are tags attached to Attacks, Spells and Equipment. They are short reminders of how something works. Most but not all are combat related.

1 shot. This item can be used once and never again.

2hds. This attack requires two hands to make it work.

Acid. This attack does scar damage.

Ammo. This is the number of shots an attack can make before needing to be reloaded. Natural attacks that use ammo, such as snake venom or dragon's breath, reload as the creature sleeps.

Armor. This is the armor value an item supplies.

Bastard. A bastard weapon is a one-handed Melee weapon made with an elongated grip that allows it to be used with two hands when needed. When used with two hands it gains **Damage +2**. A non-bastard weapon used with two hands only gains Damage +1.

Turning a weapon into a bastard weapon increases its price and weight by **10%**. Be sure to attach the word Bastard to its name, such as *Bastard Sword* or *Bastard Mace*.

Weapons that have Bastard as an aspect, such as the spear, are made to be used one-handed but can easily be used with two for a +2 damage bonus.

Bal. Any melee weapon can be thrown using **Range 5**. Balanced weapons increase this range to **Range 10**.

Burst. This attack fires off a machine gun like burst. The die roll that follows it determines how many targets it will hit. See *Burst* in *Adventure* for more on this.

Close. This melee attack was made for fighting at close quarters, meaning two opponents right on top of each other. Other weapons take **Hit -2** when trying this.

DC. DC is used against this attack.

Def. The ability that follows this aspect is the one you make a check of to defend against it.

Dur. Dur is short for **Duration**. It tells us how long a spell lasts. A number is a number of rounds. If a **PS** follows it that stands for *Per Success*. A spell with 5 PS is one that will last five rounds per success.

Dur Enc means the spell will last for the length of an encounter or 10 minutes, whichever comes first. Basically, it will be there until the battle is over.

Dur Conc means the spell will last as long as its caster concentrates on making it last, up to 1 encounter. Taking damage or trying to do anything other than moving around will dismiss it.

Electric. Electric attacks go right through metal armor. This nullifies any impact armor has on your AC/DC. If you are sopping wet it nullifies AC/DC altogether.

Fire. This attack stands a chance of setting you on fire. See *Fire* in *Adventure*.

Flex. Flexible attacks were basically made to get around shields. Anyone using one against a flexible attack should subtract 4 from their AC/DC (or 2 if using the middle).

Great. Like Bastard, this aspect is normally found attached to the name of a weapon. It is a one-handed Melee weapon made bigger and two-handed to deal more damage. Only Muscle and M/D weapons can be made into great ones.

The weapon gains **Damage +3** but you must use two hands to wield it. Having a great weapon made increases its price and weight by **25%**. Be sure to attach the word Great to its name, such as *Great Sword* or *Great Axe*.

HD. Half-Defense. AC/DC only works half as well against this attack.

Lvl. This is the level of a spell.

Light. The number of 10' squares a light source will illuminate beyond the one its bearer is in.

NA. No Activation. This item may be magical but it does not need to be activated for it to work. See *Magic Items*.

ND. No-Defense. AC/DC does not protect against this attack.

Necro. This attack kills the flesh it hits. It does scar damage instead of tear damage.

Poison. The number behind this aspect is the strength of the poison.

Reach. These weapons have the benefit of reach. Weapons without it can only attack into an adjacent space. Reach can attack over 1 space. If a number has been attached to it, like Reach 2, that is the number of steps that the attack can reach over.

Rng. Rng is short for Ranged and used by attacks that hit from a distance. This is the number of steps that it takes to bring on a **Hit -2** penalty. At -6 maximum range is reached.

Rld. Rld is short for Reload. This is the number of actions/rounds that it takes to reload a weapon.

Save. The ability that follows this aspect is the one you make a save of to defend against it.

SEP. Single Effect Power. A character can only be effected once by it. Casting a spell like Haste on a character multiple times will just cause the most recent cast to replace the older ones.

SUP. Single Use Power. Future casts of this spell will dismiss earlier casts of it. For example, the spell Curse will last until the character casts Curse again. The new casting dismisses the old one, freeing whoever the curse was cast upon.

Time. This is the amount of time it takes to cast a spell or commit some kind of action that cannot be pulled off in a single round. If just a number, like Time 1, it is a number of **rounds**.

During this time the character can do nothing but work on committing that action. If damaged or otherwise distracted the attempt will be lost and the character will have to start over.

Once the time requirement has been fulfilled a check for it can be made in the following round. So a spell with *Time 1* can be cast every other round with the in-between rounds spent preparing for the next cast.

Touch. To use this power a character must physically come into contact, skin to skin, with what it effects.

Body Size

Characters and creatures come in an infinite variety of shapes and sizes. To keep this under control we narrow it down to fifteen different sizes. The default is Medium or "Man-Sized" and changes nothing.

Index	Mass	DMG	Dis
1 Tiny	0.3	0.4	0.5
2 Teeny	0.5	0.6	0.8
3 Small	0.8	0.8	1
4 Medium	1	1	1
5 Large	1.5	1.2	1
6 Extra	2	1.5	1.5
7 Big	4	2	2
8 Huge	8	4	3
9 Massive	12	6	4
10 Enormous	20	8	6
11 Humongous	40	10	8
12 Colossal	60	15	10
13 Gigantic	100	20	12
14 Titanic	200	30	15
15 Gargantuan	300	50	20

Index. The number before a body size is its **Index**. This is most often used when changing body sizes by magical means. If a growth potion increases your size by 3 sizes and your size index is 4 then you grow to become Big with a size index of 7.

Mass. Mass is a multiplier which tells us how the size relates to medium. A tiny creature has only half the mass of a medium-sized character. A huge one will have eight times that mass. Things that Mass should multiply:

Muscle strengths.

Weight of equipment made to fit the character's size.

Base Load for determining encumbrance.

Food, the amount one needs to eat.

Body Weight, what comes from your Muscle score.

Note that mass multiplies muscle *strengths*. It only comes into play after the dice have been rolled. It should not effect character creation (aside from equipment weight, base load, food and body weight).

DMG. This multiplier deals with damage. At base it multiplies

Hit Points.

Damage of weapons and attacks.

Armor of defensive equipment.

So a medium-sized character with 10 hit points will have 8 when made small and 40 when huge. That character's sword does 8s at medium size, 6s when small and 32s when huge. Spells designed to do damage will also be multiplied.

DMG also multiplies the damage one does to oneself, such as by trying hard or going without food or water. For example, trying hard does 1 point of wear damage. A huge creature with DMG 4 will take 4 points every time it tries hard. We always round down, so while a Large character will still only take 3 points of wear when trying their hardest, an Extra large one will take 4.

This may seem unfair to smaller than medium-sized characters, except Small characters get to use **half-points** when exhausting themselves, Teeny and Tiny characters use **third-points**. Instead of drawing a line through an entire hit point, you draw a line through half of one. For third points you put three checks inside the circle.

[image]

When it comes to the amount of effort points you get from resting and healing damage. Divide that amount by your DMG. A Huge character that heals 40 points of wear damage should only gain 10 XP from it ($40 / 4 = 10$). Small characters get **double** the amount they recover, Teeny and Tiny characters gain **triple** it.

Dis. Dis is short for **Distance** and used to multiply movement speeds and distances. A medium-sized breath weapon has a 3 step blast radius. A tiny dragon's breath weapon would only strike a 2 step radius. Meanwhile a gargantuan dragon would strike a 60 step radius.

Melee attacks have a distance of sorts with Normal being what we use when neither *Close* nor *Reach* is mentioned. To change the distance of a medium-sized attack multiply the following by the character's Dis.

- Close = 1
- Normal = 2
- Reach = 3
- Reach 2 = 4
- Reach 3 = 5
- Reach 4 = 6

Subtract 2 to get its Reach number. End with 1 and that is Reach, a 0 is Normal and a -1 or less is Close.

So a medium-sized dragon claw has a Close reach. For a tiny dragon you would multiply 1 x 0.5 to get half a point that rounds down to zero. Minus 2 makes for a -2 which keeps it at Close. Meanwhile, a gargantuan dragon would multiply 1 x 20 and that 20 minus 2 would give the attack a Reach 18.

Size Dodge. You gain a bonus to dodging attacks when fighting anyone larger than yourself. The table below uses the first three letters of each size name to identify those sizes.

Size	+2	+4	+6
1 Tiny	Tee	Sma	Med
2 Teeny	Sma	Med	Lar
3 Small	Med	Lar	Ext
4 Medium	Lar	Ext	Big
5 Large	Ext	Big	Hug
6 Extra	Big	Hug	Mas
7 Big	Hug	Mas	Hum
8 Huge	Mas	Hum	Eno
9 Massive	Hum	Eno	Col
10 Humongous	Eno	Col	Gig
11 Enormous	Col	Gig	Tit
12 Colossal	Gig	Tit	Gar
13 Gigantic	Tit	Gar	-
14 Titanic	Gar	-	-
15 Gargantuan	-	-	-

So a Medium-sized character should have Lar +2, Ext +4, Big +6. This means they get a +2 when trying to dodge large opponents, a +4 for extra large ones, or a +6 for big or bigger opponents. The bonus tops out at +6 because at that point they don't need to hit you just the general area you are in.

Keep in mind that these bonuses only work when you are actively dodging your opponent. See *Dodge* in *Adventure* for more.

Equipment. The world of Dragonhead is largely a medium-sized world. All equipment will be medium-sized by default. Special items of different sizes can be made but both their **Price** and **Weight** should be multiplied by their **Size Mass**. A huge sword will cost and weigh 8 times as much as a normal one. An exception to this is with smaller than medium equipment. The weight will change but the price remains the same.

You may use equipment that is not your size but every **size index** of difference will bring a **-2** to the check, with an additional **-2** if two-handed. A small halfling trying to wield a large sword will take a **-4** for the two size indexes of difference, **-6** if it is two-handed. The same goes for characters trying to use equipment which is too small for them.

Burst Attacks

A burst attack fires off a machine-gun like volley of missiles. Make the attack, roll for damage and follow it with a roll of its burst die. This is the number of shots that hit.

Burst 1d4 = Light

Burst 1d6 = Small

Burst 1d8 = Medium

Burst 1d10 = Large

Burst 1d12 = Heavy

Burst 1d20 = Huge

For ammo purposes the number of shots fired is equal to the best number on the burst die. A medium burst fires off eight shots. Each shot will deliver a separate serving of the damage you rolled. Who the shots hit and how many times is left up to you.

So if you roll up 5 points of damage with a 4 shot burst. The burst will deliver 4 shots each doing 5 points of damage. AC/DC defends against each shot. These can be aimed all at one target or four different targets or any combination inbetween.

Spreading the Burst. With this said, the farther apart your targets are the more likely you will be to miss them. A burst can be fanned out over an area but it will effect your burst roll:

Tight concentration (15° angle) = -1

Loose concentration (45° angle) = -2

Wide spread of fire (90° angle) = -3

So if you spread a medium burst over a wide area you would roll a 1d8-3. Roll less than 1 and you miss everything.

Climbing

Any creature with the **Climb** or **Cling** form of movement should have no problem climbing a vertical surface, but sometimes even monkeys fall out of trees.

Climbing is a **Dexterity** check made hard or easy by the nature of the climb. The slicker, more vertical or higher the climb the harder the check should be. Meanwhile, using climbing gear or climbing a surface the character has climbed many times before will make it easier. Classes that have Climb in their features list get to add their class bonus as well.

With a little fail the check should be made again. For a full fail roll **1d4** to figure out how far the character managed to climb before losing ones grip:

1: 100% of the way.

2: 75% of the way.

3: 50% of the way.

4: 25% of the way.

So a character trying to climb a 40 foot ascent fails and rolls a 2? That character will fall 30 feet to the ground and take 1d20 + 1d10 in damage (see *Falling*).

Typically, just one climbing check is made for the entire ascent, but with a long climb such as up a mountain-side more checks may be needed, each representing the climb to a different stopping point.

Cover

Taking cover means hiding behind something to protect your character from attack. There are three levels of coverage.

Partial Cover 33%. At least a third of your body is covered. You can attack normally.

Full Cover 66%. At least two thirds of your body is covered. You attack with **Hit -2**.

Total Cover 99%. You believe yourself to be completely hidden behind something. To keep total cover you cannot attack.

Roll **1d100** when attacked. Roll **equal to or less** than the percentage attached to the cover and it will be hit instead of your character.

Keep in mind that not all cover is equal. A haystack is not going to provide the same protection as a stone wall. When in doubt, roll a die and treat it like extra armor.

Taking cover behind a stack of wood would probably grant you 1d12 extra AC/DC when the cover is hit.

Diving for Cover. For an area attack you need to use your action to dive for cover. Check the best you have for either **Dexterity** or **Luck**. This will be made hard or easy depending on just how much cover there is to dive behind.

Diving For Cover **Dexterity or Luck**

- 5:** No Damage.
- 3:** Quarter Damage.
- 1:** Half Damage.
- L:** Full Damage
- F:** Double Damage.
- C:** Triple Damage.

What results is the amount of damage you will take from the attack before your AC/DC reduces it. Because it can result in taking more damage, the check is optional and will not be taken by most creatures and NPC's.

Dodge

AC is you doing everything you can to avoid taking damage - parrying blows, bobbing and weaving - while still making an attack. When you declare that you are going to **Dodge** in combat, you are giving up your attack to better avoid being hit.

Roll your Dodge modifier and anyone trying to hit you for the remainder of the round will need to beat your dodge strength to do so, otherwise they miss. This only works against normal attacks. It does not work against magic or area attacks.

Dodge-N-Attack. The catch is that you need to give up your attack to do this. With a **Dodge-N-Attack** you can both dodge and attack in the same round, but both will take a **-2** penalty.

Dodging in Battle. When fighting a battle, Side-By-Side, you may dodge attacks when your side goes to defend itself. Essentially you are starting your next attack early.

So if your side lost initiative, that dodge will stop you from making an attack later in the round. If you won initiative, your dodge will stop you from making an attack in the following round.

Divine Power

Raging across the universe is a secret war between the divine forces of Good and Evil. When you pick your alignment you are siding with one or the other, or choosing not to by staying Neutral.

Fickle Gods. The only thing Good and Evil hate more than neutrality is each other. They grant characters like Clerics and Paladins the ability to cast magic, but they are very fickle about its use. No divine magic may be used to help the other side or harm ones own. Anything neutral is fair game.

So even if you are an evil cleric with a serious beef against another evil cleric, you may not use your magic to harm that cleric, only help. Doing so helps the cause of Evil in its goal of universal domination and the gods will not debate the matter.

Consecration. One way in which this war is waged is through acts of **Consecration**, using the clerical spell of the same name. When successfully cast on a place it will grant it an **Alignment Strength** equal to the strength of the spell. Characters and Creatures of an opposing alignment cannot enter or even look into it without first beating it with a **Spirit** check. Divine magic cast in a place consecrated to an opposing alignment will need to beat that strength or automatically fail.

See Some Evil. Anyone can sense the good or evil nature of a place using nothing more than a **Wisdom** check. Those with divine spell powers get to add their level bonus to the check. However, even the most successful check will only give the character a general unfocused feeling. They will sense a good or evil presence and that's about it. To actually sense alignment with accuracy you need the power **Detect Alignment**.

Falling

Any time a character takes a fall we turn the number of feet that they fell into a die roll using the **Damage** table. This determines the amount of actual damage the character will take once they hit rock bottom.

Fall 10' and you take 1d10 in damage.

Fall 100' and you take 1d100 in damage.

DC protects against this at **half** value. The damage type of the fall depends on what you land on:

None = Water, deep snow, large hay pile.

Impact = Dirt, mud, lawn, field.

Blunt = Concrete, cobblestones, flagstones.

Mixed = Jagged rocks, broken timbers.

Sharp = Sharp rocks, broken glass.

Pierce = Spikes, stalactites.

Fire

Take damage from an attack bearing the **Fire** aspect and you need to make a **Luck Save** to see if it sets you on fire. Succeed and nothing happens. Fail and you catch fire. The fire damage roll should be made at the **end** of each round, including the one that set you a blaze.

Fire

Luck Save

1: Nothing Happens.

L: Fire Damage 1d4.

F: Fire Damage 1d6.

C: Fire Damage 1d12.

Stop, drop and roll will help put the fire out. Gamewise it lets you remake the luck check for every **three rounds** spent doing nothing but that. Diving into something like a pool of water will put the flames out instantly.

Food & Water

Food is fuel and everything that is naturally alive needs to eat and drink in order to survive. Each **day** spent without one or the other will do bodily harm. AC/DC does not protect against this.

No Food = 1d6b per day.

No Water = 1d6s per day.

Provisions. Medium sized characters need to consume at least 1 pound of food and 1 pint of water per day. Other size characters should multiply this by their Body Mass. Fetid or insubstantial food and water will reduce the die roll from 1d6 to 1d4. Beer, wine, milk and similar drinks can stand in for water. Liquor or salt water may not. Normally characters eat one big meal at the end of the day. Skip it and that is when the starvation damage hits.

Burning Fat. Body fat can be burned in place of eating food to keep from starving. One pound of fat equals one pound of food. Unfortunately, it doesn't help with dehydration. Burning body fat in place of food when food is available requires a **Hard Spirit** check.

Grapple

Grappling is wrestling. It is a **Muscle vs Muscle** challenge where the winner locks the loser in a hold using the strength they won the challenge at. The character who won the grapple can do nothing but maintain it, otherwise they have to let the other character go free.

Round after round the loser can do nothing except attempt to escape, making a **Muscle** check to bust loose or a **Dexterity** check to wriggle free. Defeat the grapple strength and you do so. If all a character wants to do is avoid being grappled they may defend with their Dexterity from the start.

One-Armed Grapple. You can grapple someone using just one arm, keeping your other arm free but doing so makes the check harder and anything you do with that free arm will also take a -2.

Pile-On. More than one character can attempt to grapple another. They combine their strengths, but each character makes a **Hard Muscle** check because of the confusion this creates.

Size Differences. You may only grapple characters and creatures which are the same size as yourself or smaller. A human cannot grapple a giant. A halfling could try but they're only going to end up wrapping themselves around the giant's leg like a sock.

Creatures that are smaller than their grappler should be given a +2 bonus when using their Dexterity to escape.

Healing

Wear damage heals easily enough with a simple rest or a night of sleep (see *Rest & Sleep*). Tear damage takes far more time. Scar damage cannot be healed naturally. All of it - Wear, Tear and Scar - can be healed Magically if you have access to healing potions or a spell like *Heal Damage*.

Natural Healing. Naturally healing tear damage requires a **Constitution Save** made after **1 week** spent doing nothing but taking it easy and trying to recuperate. Roll **1d6** and multiply it by the success of the check to find the number of tears you recover.

Natural Healing

Constitution Save after 1 Week

S: Heal 1d6 Tears x Success.

L: No Damage Healed.

F: Scar 1d6.

C: Die from Gangrene.

With a full fail the tears of damage do not heal but scar over. Roll 1d6 to figure out how many do so. You will not scar more damage than you have to heal.

If your class has *Natural Healing* in its features list, or you know somebody who has it that can assist you, add the class bonus to the check.

Magical Healing. Magic that heals damage typically works like a **blunt** attack in reverse. You make a check to find its success, roll for damage and multiply it. The wear and tear heals damage instead of inflicting it. AC/DC will try to thwart this if it comes from anything but a potion, so be sure to remove your armor first.

While magic healing is magical being healed by it is far from pleasant. The experience is akin to having salt poured on a wound, kerosene poured on the salt and the whole thing set on fire. The character being healed cannot do anything while ones wounds are being healed and will need to make **Double Hard Spirit** check to keep from crying out in agony.

Magic healing can regrow patches of missing flesh, muscle and bone, it can reattach severed limbs, but it cannot bring the dead back to life. Repaired flesh will often be exceedingly pale and may take **1d4 years** to return to the color of the flesh that surrounds it.

Beware those who come streaked in white!

Healing Scars. Magic can be used to heal scar damage but only after all other wear and tear damage has been healed first. It takes **10 healing points** to repair each scar.

Hide & Sneak

Skulking about is essentially a **Wisdom Challenge** pitting the worst strength of the hidiers against the best strength of the seekers. If all of the hidiers can beat the best of the seekers they pass undetected.

Worst Hider > Best Seeker = No Detection.

On the hider's side, studying the area and trying to come up with an interesting way to move through it or hide in it may make for an easier check. Wearing metal armor or carrying something that might rattle or reflect light will make the check harder.

On the seeker's side, they need to be actively searching for something. If just passively milling around and not looking for anything in particular their check should be a **Hard Wisdom** check.

Hindrances

A hindrance is anything wrong with your character. The character is sick, intoxicated, carrying too much stuff, etc. This penalty effects **everything** a character does, but it does not effect Saving Throws because Saves are a test of character and not

representative of anything the character actually does. Hindrances should be written down in the **Hinders** section of a character sheet and erased as they clear up.

Hirelings

Hirelings are NPCs you hire to accompany the party on an adventure, possibly to carry gear, guide your way through the wilderness, fight on your behalf or simply hold a torch. How much this costs per day of service depends on what you are asking the hireling to do, the level of the hireling, as well as your character's charisma.

Hiring Hirelings

Charisma

- 4:** Base Rate \$5
- 3:** Base Rate \$10
- 2:** Base Rate \$20
- 1:** Base Rate \$30
- L:** Base Rate \$60
- F:** Sorry mate, no sale.
- C:** Did you just insult my mother?

Multiply the Base Rate by the hireling's level and that is their **daily rate** in copper pieces. A third level fighter with a base rate of \$20 will cost you \$60 per day. *Be sure to write this down somewhere!* If hired to go on a journey of seven days or more, hirelings will want at least a **week's worth of pay in advance** before setting out.

Loyalty. During the adventure, any event which puts the operation in jeopardy such as the death of a party member, having to flee a powerful force, or a demand going beyond what the hireling signed on for will be cause a loyalty challenge.

This is a **Charisma vs Wisdom** challenge pitting the employer's charisma against the hireling's wisdom. It's a secret challenge. The employer cannot try hard with the charisma check and that character's player will not know how it turned out until it is already too late.

Rout, Run & Mutiny! A lost loyalty challenge will become apparent once the hireling takes the next best opportunity to disappear into the wilderness.

Good aligned hirelings will often sneak off into the night hoping to never run into the party again. They may even leave behind their advance as a token of good will.

Neutral hirelings will also disappear. Not only will they not give back their advance but they will probably steal a few things on the way out.

Evil hirelings will not only steal and run but unless they have something better to do they may choose to hang out in the wilderness, stalking the party, hoping to pounce on them as they return home weakened by the adventure yet laden with treasure.

DM Controlled. No matter how much force of charisma a character has over their hirelings, they are ultimately creatures run by the DM. Treat them badly, force

them to take risks your character is not willing to take and all agreements are off. The hirelings will quit and even the good ones may eventually come seeking retribution.

Max Number of Hirelings? The only thing limiting the number of hirelings a character can have is the amount of money they have to spend on them. What works for a small party of adventurers also works with a continental army.

Rebellion! When it comes to large numbers of hirelings it is recommended that the DM choose an NPC to represent the whole group. This character will be a revolutionary leader actively instigating revolt against the employer. Instead of a loyalty challenge there should be a **Charisma Competition** between the two.

If the rebel leader wins those forces will break away to become a separate faction, falling in behind the rebel leader's command. Otherwise the rebel leader will be abandoned and have to flee.

Jumping & Leaping

Jumping and Leaping is a **Dexterity** check made harder by just how far you have to jump and how intrepid the leap actually is. There is a big difference between jumping between puddles and jumping between roof tops.

Jumping & Leaping Dexterity

3: You make it with a backflip or two.

2: You make it in style.

1: You make the leap.

L: You are on the other side dangling by your fingertips.

F: GAHhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh-hhh! *Splat*.

Magic Items

Magic items that simply bear a bonus, such as the classic *Long Sword +1*, will add their bonus never failing. Those that do something magical, such as a *Wand of Fireballs*, needs to be activated when it is used. To do this check your Magic modifier plus any quality bonus the item may have. Classes do not provide a level bonus for activating magic items.

$$\text{Hit} = \text{Magic} + \text{Quality}.$$

If the item is also a weapon, such as a *Sword of Flame*, it will need two hit modifiers. The first should be for activation. The second for making attacks with it. Separate them with a slash.

Activation! Point the item in the right direction, say the incantation, check its Hit, and hope for the best. Success determines just how much magic comes pouring

out of it. A wand of fireballs would use this check to find the damage done by the fireball.

Magical Item Activation

Magic + Quality

- 1:** It Works!
- L:** Nothing Happens.
- F:** Item Breaks.
- C:** Item Destroyed!

Fragile Things. Fully fail the activation and the item goes *Pfzzt!* and will never work again. Crashing the activation not only breaks the item but there is a crash table in the DMG to tell us what else happens as the item breaks.

Potions & Scrolls. Potions and Scrolls are **one-shot** magic items. They work once and that is it. **3 rounds** of dedicated action are needed to consume a potion or read a scroll aloud and release the magic contained within. When the activation fails the item reveals itself to be a dud. Crashing the activation does much worse.

Magical Radiance. Magical items often glow with a magical radiance when they are working but not when they are not. To characters using a spell like **Detect Magic** they will glow constantly and be eye-stingingly bright when active. This radiance is a lot like light and easy to block. Sheathe a magical sword, throw a blanket over a wand and the radiance will not shine through.

Identifying Magic Items. Unless an item is up for sale, most are not going to have a small tag on them telling you what they do. Even when they do, it is not always wise to trust a tag.

There are two ways to figure out what a magic item does. One is to use it and hope for the best. The other is to take it to someone who is knowledgeable in such matters and have them try to identify it. The more common an item is, the easier it will be to identify, the more rare the harder.

Identify Magic Item

Intellect

- 3:** Knowledge with absolute certainty!
- 2:** Fairly certain what it is.
- 1:** Has a clue.
- L:** Hasn't a clue.
- F:** Believes it to be something else.
- C:** Accidentally destroys the item.

It usually takes **1d10 minutes** to identify an item and will cost **2d6 silver** pieces when dealing with someone who does this professionally.

Ultimately, even a mind blowing sense of absolute certainty is still just a guess. One will never truly know what a magic item does until it is used.

Miniatures

You do not need miniatures to play Dragonhead but they really do help. If you are serious about miniatures, here are a few things you might want to have on hand:

Miniatures. Paper, Plastic or Metal. One for each character and creature involved.

A Vinyl Battle Mat. Covered in 1-inch squares or hexes, these are designed to be drawn on using Dry Erasable Markers.

Dry Erasable Markers. For drawing walls, doors and other things. Do not use permanent markers. *Sharpies are forever!*

A Roll of Paper Towels. For cleaning off the mat after a battle.

A Small Measuring Tape. For making quick distance measurements.

A Mini-Mag Light. For lighting up areas.

Hexes or Squares? Often dungeons use squares while wilderness encounters use hexes. Both have their benefits and drawbacks.

Grids are good for places defined by walls, but if you want to move diagonally it will take 2 steps of movement. If you don't have it you can't go there.

Hexes allow you to move in any direction, but if something is occupying more than half a hex, such as a wall, you have to move around that hex instead of moving through it.

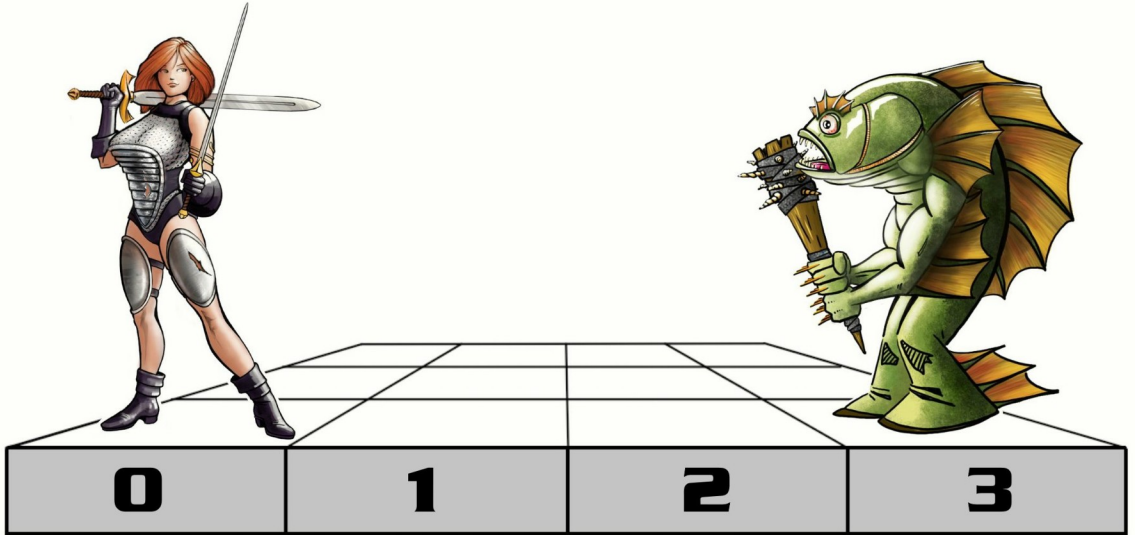
Free-Form Movement. Another option is to play without a grid of any sort. In this case you use a ruler to measure the distance traveled. Every 1 inch is 1 step of movement. If the base of your mini is 1 inch wide you can simply rock it forward, making sure the back of its base touches the spot where the front of the mini stood one step ago.

The Step. Movement is measured in **steps**. A step is a rough measure of distance equal to 3 to 3.3 feet. It is what a typical adult human covers with a single step which makes it very relatable. The fuzzy 0.3 margin helps us fit nine steps inside a ten foot square on a larger dungeon map.

Turning. A character traveling normally can turn up to **90 degrees** per step without problem. Turning more than that will cost you an **extra step** of movement. Running characters can only turn up to 45 degrees per step.

Running. Running doubles your movement speed but will bring a -2 to anything you do during that round. Any form of movement can be made to run, even Fly, Swim or Dig.

Measuring Distance. When measuring distance we count the **steps between** two characters. Start with the step adjacent to the one you are in and stop with the one adjacent to your opponent. In the example below, Carmin is 2 steps away from the Troglodyte.



This is where having a pocket tape measure comes in handy. Instead of counting squares you can measure any distance at any angle. Just be sure to round down! A trogg standing 2.7 inches away is still standing just 2 steps away.

Melee Reach. Most melee attacks can only hit into an adjacent step. Those with the **Reach** aspect, such as a spear, can **reach over** that step to hit an opponent. If the Reach has a number attached to it, such as the Halberd's Reach 2, it can reach across that many steps to make the attack.

In the example above neither Carmin nor the trogg can reach each other. Wielding a spear with *Reach* she could strike into step 2 and still not reach the trogg. Wielding a halberd with *Reach 2* she could finally hit the trogg.

The problem with reaching attacks is that most are only good for that distance. Your attack will suffer a Hit -2 when your opponent is standing inside of your reach.

Close Quarters. Melee attacks that have the **Close** aspect are small like daggers. They can attack into an adjacent space but not a diagonal one. Mostly they are meant for close quarters combat where two characters are right on top of each other, occupying the same space. Trying to use a normal weapon in close quarters will bring on a **Hit -2**. If the weapon has Reach it becomes a Hit -4.

Sharing Spaces? With the exception of close quarters, minis should never share the same space. They may move through the same space with a Slip Thru (See *Slip-Thru* below) but they shouldn't end their movement in the same space as another character or creature.

Ranged Attacks. Ranged attacks can hit from a distance, but they will take a **Hit -2** for every length of distance equal to the attack's Range Number.

An attack with Range 5 is a close range attack. At 5 steps out a -2 should be taken. At 10 steps it increases to -4. At 15 steps it turns into -6. At Hit -6 maximum range has been reached and the shot can go no further.

Area Attacks. For area attacks, find the space the blast detonates in, designate it step 0, and measure on the battle mat the size of its radius either **horizontally or vertically**. Now hold the flashlight above the point of detonation and move it up or down until the edge of the light hits the outer edge of the blast. Any mini caught in this light will be hit by it.

For cone shaped blasts, lay the flashlight on its side behind the point of detonation and shine it forward. Mini-mag lights are good for this because they are bright, portable and come with a head that can be focused into a tight or wide beam.

Retreat. A character can move forward or backward at normal speed, but they can only run in a forward direction. To run from a fight requires turning your back to your opponent. Nothing changes, but anyone attacking your backside gets to hit your DC.

Morale

Morale is for monsters. It is a gauge of just how ready creatures are to panic and flee from a fight. Characters always fight until they choose not to. When one of the following happens, that is the time to check Morale.

Initiative is lost.

Hit with a Surprise Attack.

Leader is incapacitated.

Half have been knocked unconscious or killed.

Reinforcements for the enemy have arrived.

Morale is a Spirit check which may be made harder by just how hopeless the situation seems. Certain classes, such as the Warlord, will help those under the warlord's leadership.

Morale **Spirit**

1: Continue to fight!

L: Will stop fighting and back away from the area.

F: Will turn and run from the area.

C: Will turn and run screaming with fear.

Any failure will have the creatures stop fighting and try to escape, some more rationally than others. If the creatures cannot escape they will lay down their weapons and try to plea bargain with the characters. Those who run screaming with fear will run blindly off into the unknown for the next 1d6 minutes.

Hirelings. While hirelings may work for the PCs, they are still technically creatures. Morale rolls should be made for them when things do not go so well for the party. Those that actually leave the area will never be seen again.

Multi-Classing

If you have the XP you may give your character more than one class, but there are a few stipulations that need to be heeded.

Class Count. You cannot have more than **three** callings if human or two callings and a race if not human. Only one of your classes may be first level. You can have any number of transformations, but something needs to happen during the game to explain the transformation. You can't simply decide to be a vampire.

Just One Race. This should go without saying, but you can only have one race class and it needs to be the one the character was created with. If your character started with a calling that character's race is human. The calling is its race class.

It Need to Make Sense. You shouldn't combine classes which are incompatible with each other. Wizards, Warlocks and Barbarians hate each other with a passion, so you would be hard pressed to ever come upon a Barbarian / Wizard.

Even if a barbarian wanted to become a wizard, the callings are often presided over by other members of the class who would be very unwilling to teach a barbarian how to become a wizard.

Class Bonus. Class Bonuses **do not combine**. You get the best of what your separate classes have to offer. If Cleric gives you Melee +1 and Fighter gives you Melee +2 you get the +2. They do not combine to create a +3.

Arms & Armor. The most restrictive requirements apply. A Fighter / Wizard should still not be wearing any armor.

Free Equipment. If the new class supplies something your old class does not then you get it, providing you have a need for it. There is no reason to give a Fighter / Wizard free armor if they are never going to wear it.

Movement & Base Hit Points. Use the movement and base hit points provided by the first class your character ever had. Ignore those brought on by the other classes.

Natural Casters

In the realm of magic-users, natural-casters make up that great swath of characters and creatures who were simply born with the ability to make magic work. Divine power had nothing to do with it nor were they plowing through musty old tomes in search of magic spells. Natural-casters fix their minds on making something happen and it just happens. Nearly all monsters with magical abilities are natural casters.

Quiet Casters. Unlike spell-casters and divine power users, natural casters do not need to make a verbal exclamation to make their powers work. You cannot stop them with a Silence spell.

Power Acquisition. Gamewise, when a natural-caster's Spell Level count increases the character's banger simply pick the spell they want as a new power. From the character's point of view the new power just appears one day with no apparent explanation.

Power Failure. When a natural caster fails to cast a power it becomes scrambled inside their head. X it out on your character sheet. It takes **1 hour of meditation per spell level** to unscramble the power and get it working again. Time spent sleeping also works for this.

No Swapping. The big drawback of being a natural-caster is how little control the character has over their powers. Once a power is acquired it is there for life. Even if the character's Spell Level count somehow drops and they lose a power, once that count bounces back up the same powers will be regained.

Picking Pockets

Picking pockets is a **Hard Dexterity vs Wisdom** challenge. Beat your mark and you lift a small and presumably valuable item off that person.

Pick Pocket

Hard Dexterity vs Wisdom

- 5:** Notice in 1d6 weeks.
- 4:** Notice in 1d6 days.
- 3:** Notice in 1d6 hours.
- 2:** Notice in 1d6 minutes.
- 1:** Notice in 1d6 rounds.
- L:** Fail to snatch item.
- F:** Fail and be caught trying to steal it.
- C:** Owner gets to make a surprise attack!

The more successful you are the longer it will take for the defender to notice something is missing. With a fail you do not grab the item. With a crash the owner of

the item sees you coming from a mile away and can elect to hit you with a surprise attack as you go in for the grab.

This check is made hard by just how well protected the item is. Maybe it is chained to the character or hanging around their neck. It is made easier by just how distracted the defender might be, possibly by another character doing what they can to distract the mark.

Poison

Poisons should come with a strength that they use to attack anyone who has been poisoned by it. Gamewise this is a **Poison vs Constitution Save**. If the character defeats the poison nothing happens. When the poison wins the nature of the poison and its success determines what happens next.

Lethal Poison. The character will die in **1d6 minutes** minus 1 minute for each success. With less than a minute the character dies instantly.

Knock-Out Drug. The character is knocked unconscious for **1d6 hours** per success.

Paralytic Poison. The character will be immobilized yet still aware of all that is happening for **1d6 hours** per success.

Hallucinogen. The character trips through wild dreams, barely conscious of the actual world. This lasts **1d6 hours** per success.

Intoxicant. Each success saddles the character with a **Drunk -2** hindrance. It takes 1 hour to remove each -1 from the character's system.

Irritant. This is typically a spray such as a stinging or stinking mist, characters defend against it with a **Spirit Check**. Each success causes the character to flee for **1d6 minutes**.

Venom. Poisons are imbibed. Venom is injected. Snake bite, scorpion sting, a poisoned dagger - all need to do at least **1 tear** of damage to deliver a dose of poison.

Antidotes. An antidote is a reverse poison. If administered within **10 minutes** of a poisoning and if its strength can **defeat the strength of the poison** it will neutralize the effect. In the case of lethal poisons, if the poison actually killed a character the antidote will bring them back from the brink of death.

Pushes

Sometimes you just want to push the other guy around. There are a number of different ways to do this, each involves a challenge of some sort. Succeed with a tackle, trip or throw and your opponent will be knocked to the ground and need to spend **1 action** standing back up before they can do anything. Success multiplies the damage done. Type depends on what the creature lands on (see *Falls*). You cannot trip, tackle or throw anyone who weighs more than **twice** your own weight.

Trips. With a trip you knock your opponent off-balance, trying to drop them on their butt. This is a **Dexterity Challenge** where the tripped character takes 1d4 from the fall.

Throws. With a throw you pick your opponent up and slam them down. It's a **Hard Muscle vs Muscle** where you get to throw your opponent **1 step per success** in a direction of your choice. Being thrown does 1d8 in falling damage.

Tackles. With a tackle you slam your opponent with your shoulder, it uses **Muscle vs Dexterity** and does 1d6 per success.

Rushes. With a rush all you want to do is push your opponent around. Use **Muscle vs Muscle**. Succeed and you push your opponent around at **half speed**.

Scrum. A scrum is a rush between two groups. This is a group **Muscle Competition**. The side producing the greatest number of successes pushes the other side around at **half the speed** of its **slowest member** with a minimum of **1 SPR**. If you participate in the scrum that is all you can do for the round.

To Sum It Up....

Type	Check	Damage
Trip	Dexterity vs Dexterity	1d4
Throw	Hard Muscle vs Muscle	1d8
Tackle	Muscle vs Dexterity	1d6
Rush	Muscle vs Muscle	none
Scrum	Muscle Group Competition	none

Body Size. If your character is some size other than Medium it's mass will multiply your muscle strength. Since most of the damage that comes from a Push actually comes from a fall, body size should not multiply damage.

Rest & Sleep

Spend a minute doing nothing but trying to catch your breath, and you get to make a Rest check to see if you recover any wear damage. Start with **Constitution** and

subtract from it the number of times you have rested since your last full night of sleep. Be sure to increment your **Rest** count after each rest.

Rest

Constitution - Rest Count

4: Recover Full HP

3: Recover 3/4 HP

2: Recover 1/2 HP

1: Recover 1/4 HP

Fail and you don't recover anything. Succeed and you recover a quarter of your hit points rounded down. Multiple successes increase this amount. A character with 12 hit points will recover 3 points of wear damage with one success, 6 with two, 9 with three, and 12 with four.

Exhaustion XP. When you recover damage, be it from resting or magic, you get XP for it! *Just as long as you remember to write it down.* The DM won't do this for you. Every point of wear damage equals one experience point. 1 Wear = 1 XP.

Sleep. Characters need a full meal and at least 8 hours of sleep to be fully rested. Sleep resets everything. The character's rest count goes back to zero. Your wear damage disappears. Creatures that have natural attacks using ammo (like venom or dragon's breath) will find their ammo replenished.

If you only get half a full night of sleep, or you get the sleep but not the meal, then everything only half resets. Get neither and you get nothing.

Role-Playing

Role-Playing is where you assume the persona of a character and say what that character might say given the current situation. You speak as that character instead of yourself.

While this sounds simple enough, many do choke on it because there is a lot for the imagination to leap over. The role-player may not look or sound anything like the character they are portraying and you are sitting around a table instead in a costume on a stage filled with elaborate set pieces.

Easier Than It Looks. It's good to remember that we are not expecting Shakespeare so much as a campfire skit. You do not need to talk in a funny or distinct voice to portray a character. Often it is better if you don't as that gets exhausting after awhile. The DM can do it but of the DM is portraying someone who may only be in the game for a minute or two. There is no telling just how long your character will be around.

Like Action Figures. In many ways role-playing is like playing with action figures the way we did when we were kids, only without the action figures. Try doing what authors do. Verbally introduce your character by name before speaking as them, saying something like "Well, Megan says to the guard...", and with that

established you speak as Megan and continue doing so until she is finished or you need to switch to a different character. At that point you might say, "And Ralph is like..." and then continue speaking as Ralph.

The Power Word Like. The word *Like* may not seem like much, and if you remember the valley girls of the 1980's you know it can be abused, but Like is a powerful word in that it introduces you as doing something more than just speaking on your character's behalf. *You think like them. You emote like them.* When you wave your hands around it is easy to imagine the character doing the same.

So don't use the word *Like* too often, but do realize that it often leads to what role-players crave. Acting like a character will take you closer to truly becoming who that character is, at least for a brief moment in time.

Sense Motive

Is the character you are talking to telling the truth or is there something more than meets the eye? Sense Motive is a **Wisdom vs Charisma** challenge.

When the offense wins, it becomes obvious that the defender is holding something back, perhaps they are overly nervous, glancing about the room a little too much. You cannot figure out what they are withholding but you will know that something is there.

Slip-Thru

In combat you cannot move through a space occupied by another character or creature, not without making a **Slip-Thru** check first. This is you ducking under, sliding past, or possibly even vaulting over whatever is in your way.

Slip-thru is a **Dexterity Challenge** where if you win it you get to move through the threatened space as if it were empty. Lose and you will be stopped in the space before the one you were trying to move through and lose the rest of your action.

Back Attacks. One good reason to risk making a slip thru is so you can attack a creature's backside, which is defended by **DC**. Of course, all of this is meaningless against a creature with no definable back.

Occupied Space. When trying to slip past a character who is on your side and not trying to block your movement you will still need to make an **Dexterity** check but it will not be a challenge. Roll a **10 or better** and you succeed.

Spell Casters

Arcane magic comes from reaching with ones mind into the places that exist between spaces, grabbing invisible currents of unfathomable power and spinning them into

patterns that hopefully will cause a spell to fire and not fry you to a cinder. The spells your character knows how to cast comes from instructions written in books, as well as countless hours spent studying them.

For a brand new character you get to choose the spells they will cast. Established characters will increase the number of spell levels they can fit inside their head, but they don't get any new spells when they level up. Those they need to find, buy or steal while out on adventure.

Purchasing Spells. When you can even find spells for sale, *buying spells is not cheap!* On the black market (which is where most magic is sold) the cost is its **Spell Level x \$100 x 2d6**. So a 3rd level spell will cost \$300 to begin with and if the 2d6 rolls a 5 (300 x 5 = 1500) \$1,500 from this particular seller. For the same reason, spell-casters are often hesitant to share their spells. They paid heavily to acquire what they know (in theory at least) others should do likewise.

Copying Spells. While the spells themselves are not magical, it is quite a task to simply copy them page for page. The scribe needs to be able to read and write magic (see *Languages in Character Creation*) and it requires at least **1 day per spell level**. After all of that, a check needs to be made to see the spell was copied correctly. This uses the character's Class Bonus, plus Intellect modifier minus double the Spell Level.

$$\text{Copy Check} = \text{Class Bonus} + \text{Intellect} - \text{Spell Level} \times 2.$$

So a 4th level magic user with a +2 Intellect trying to copy a 5th level spell would check a -4 (4 + 2 - 10 = -4).

Learning A Spell. Ultimately spells are instructions and a brand new spell needs to be learned before it can be cast. This takes at least **1 full day of study per spell level**. While it is possible to cast a spell you have never seen straight from the pages of a spell book, doing so takes a **-6** on top of everything else and adds **1d100 rounds** to whatever time the spell normally takes to cast.

Scrolls vs Spells. Scrolls are magic items. Reading a scroll aloud releases the magic locked up in its paper and ink. *Scrolls are not Spells*. When a spell is found in a treasure trove these are often pages torn from someone spell book. Simply reading a spell aloud will not set it off.

Exclamation! Unless something says otherwise, spell casters need to make an exclamation of some sort to cast a spell. This means they cannot cast magic if unable to speak or make a sound. Spell casters also cannot communicate with other characters while casting a spell.

Focusing Tools. Focusing Tools are often wands, staffs, rods or crystals that carry a quality bonus given by way of the spell *Create Focusing Tool*. If you have a *Magic Wand +1* that is not tied to any spell-like power? *That is a focusing tool*. You get a +1 for any spell cast with its assistance. Only **one** focusing tool may be used at a time and it only works for spell casters.

Token Items. Some spells such as *Scry* and *Soul Jar* require a token item taken from the character or creature it is destined to effect. This is often an unwashed piece of clothing the person has worn, a piece of equipment they have used for a decent amount of time or something that was once a part of their body such as cut hair, fingernail clippings, a scale or lost tooth. Basically it is an item that connects the caster to that character and allows them to cast magic that will effect them from afar.

Fear & Suspicion. There is no getting around it, magic is a way of letting a select few acquire power over others. The spell Magic Missile may seem quaint if not cute, but the reality of the spell is tantamount to an invisible crossbow which is quick to load, never runs out of ammo and cannot be taken away from those who know how to cast it. To everyday people, Magic Missile is a nightmare made real.

Because of this, spellcasters often fall into one of two camps. The first keeps everything they do a secret. The second trumpets the fact that they can cast magic spells. They dress and act in a way which assures the world they are not to be trifled with.

In a fantasy world where magic is quite common (which may or may not be yours) public opinion could be quite lax on the matter. Otherwise it is best to have a contingency plan for the next time a crop harvest fails and the local rabble comes knocking on your door with torches and pitch-forks in tow.

Swimming

If you have the **Swim** form of movement then swimming is not a problem. Otherwise, being dropped in the water requires a **Muscle** check to figure out how to swim. For encumbrance, swimming **doubles** the weight of any equipment carried.

Sudden Swim Muscle

1: Swim with a speed equal to success x 2.

F: You sink to the bottom.

C: Startled, you inhale water and start to drown.

If you go under, you can hold your breath for as many **rounds** as your **Constitution** x 3. A character with Con 10 can hold their breath for 30 rounds. After this you exhale your last breath and drown.

Fighting in Water. If the water is not your character's natural element, everything you do in it will take a **Hit -2**. Trying to use a weapon that needs to be swung, such as a sword or mace, will take a **Hit -4**.

Drowned Characters. Any character knocked unconscious will exhale and drown. A drowned character is basically dead, but they may be brought back to life with artificial resuscitation providing it is done within **2d20 rounds** of them drowning.

This requires a **Hard Intellect** check from the character doing the resuscitation. For every success that comes of it the drowned character gets to make one **Hard Constitution** check. Success means they cough out the water and start breathing again.

Surprise Attacks!

A surprise attack is an ambush. Before the fight begins, one side needs to intentionally hide and lie in wait for the other. A **Wisdom Challenge** should be made where all the ambushers need to beat the **best strength** of those about to be ambushed. If successful...

Initiative is automatically won by the attackers.

The surprised party defends with **DC** during the first round of combat.

Vision

Unless something says otherwise, all characters come with color vision which works fine in most conditions but suffers as it grows darker. Illumination we narrow down to four stages.

Day Light is the light of a clear day. It is as bright as a ray of sunshine and very hard to replicate through artificial means.

Normal Light is the light of a cloudy day. This is akin to torch, lantern or fire light. It is the comfort zone for normal vision.

Low Light is near darkness. It is the light of a full moon or a single candle. Colors fade to gray and sight dependent actions suffer a **-2**.

No Light is perfect darkness. Nothing can be seen by normal vision. Actions that use sight will suffer a **-6**. Those that require it cannot be performed.

Because not everything lives in the daylit world, there are four major ways creatures and even some characters get around the problem of living in the dark.

Infravision. Infravision is heat vision. It can see in any level of light but it cannot see actual colors. Cool areas appear green and fade to blue, purple and black as they grow colder. Warm areas start red and fade to orange, yellow and white as they grow hotter. Large sources of heat can be blinding. Definition is lacking. You may see something in the darkness but have no idea what it is. Rest assured it is

probably not the undead. Most undead creatures do not produce body heat and are invisible to infravision.

Nightvision. Nightvision is normal vision that has adapted to low-light conditions. No penalty will be taken in normal or low light conditions, but a **-2** will be taken in daylight. In perfect darkness a character with Nightvision will be rendered blind just like everyone else.

Ultravision. Everything is slightly radioactive and ultravision sees by way of this ambient radiation. The colors it sees will be purplish and far more fluorescent than normal, almost like seeing the world through a blacklight poster. Ultravision sees fine in perfect darkness. Unlike infravision, definition is not lacking, print on a page can be read without problem, the undead show up like anything else.

Unfortunately, other light levels are painful to behold and creatures with ultravision will suffer a **-2** in normal light and a **-6** in daylight to everything they do. Prolonged exposure to daylight or any strong source of high-frequency radiation will blind ultravision permanently.

Echolocation. Echolocation is not vision but the ability to chirp out a sound and read the way it echoes back. While a creature with echolocation cannot see colors or read print, they are very good at telling where things are and can “see” in all directions at once. Loud noises will render them blind. Needless to say, they like to keep things very very quiet.

All Together. That may seem like a lot but it's not hard to keep straight. Infravision and Echolocation never suffer a penalty. Normal, Nightvision and Ultravision will suffer a **-2** or **-6** as their vision gives out.

Sight/Light	Day	Normal	Low	None
Normal	+0	+0	-2	-6
Nightvision	-2	+0	+0	-6
Ultravision	-6	-2	+0	+0

Switching Visions. Characters with Infravision or Echolocation may also have Normal, Night or Ultravision. It takes **1 round** to intentionally switch back and forth between the two, or **2d10 rounds** when a character has been blinded by a sudden blast of heat or sound.

Permanent Blindness. It is assumed that a character who is permanently blind will have learned how to deal with their affliction and only suffer a **-2** to most activities. Those actions which absolutely depend on sight cannot be performed. Actions that make prominent use of senses other than sight gain a **+2**.

THE CARDINAL RULES

Now that you've seen all the rules, this is your game! If you don't like something and the rest of your group agrees, you can change it. There are only three rules in the entire system that cannot be modified or over-ruled. These we call the **Cardinal Rules**.

What Seems Real Is Real. Reality is a big, beautiful thing. To capture it in all of its glorious detail with every single oddity, conundrum and contradiction perfectly set in place would require the creation of a gaming system that's just as vast as the universe itself. As it is we have a small fast-moving game that runs on pencils, paper, dice and imagination.

When you come across an absence in the rules, an oversight or something that just doesn't make any sense? *Think about it.* Try to see the adventure as if it were actually happening. Damn the rules! *Listen to your imagination!*

The DM is Always Right. Even when dead wrong. Deciding what is real about spaceships, magic and elementals is no small task, so no matter how off-center, irrational or glaringly bad a DM's decision may be the Dragonhead Master is always right. The DM's decisions are more important than any rule in the books.

In every debate the DM has final say.

This is not because we believe your DM to be infallible but because games only suffer when people waste time arguing about what one thing or another *actually* means. The DM always has a good valid reason for doing whatever the DM has done and is under no obligation to explain it to you. Just take it on faith that it will all make sense in time.

Of course, any DM who abuses this privilege had better be prepared to find a new gaming group sometime soon.

Always Play to Win! There are no winners or losers in a role playing game. This sage old advice is utter nonsense. These games can be won and they can be lost but not in the way that most might think.

You will know you are losing when boredom sets in. When conversations stray from the adventure at hand. When people start to play with their phones rather than their characters.

You are winning when the air crackles with laughter and excitement. When eyes widen and people find themselves wishing the adventure would never end. *That is winning!* And winning is the responsibility of everyone at the table.

We all win or we all lose.

Always play to win!