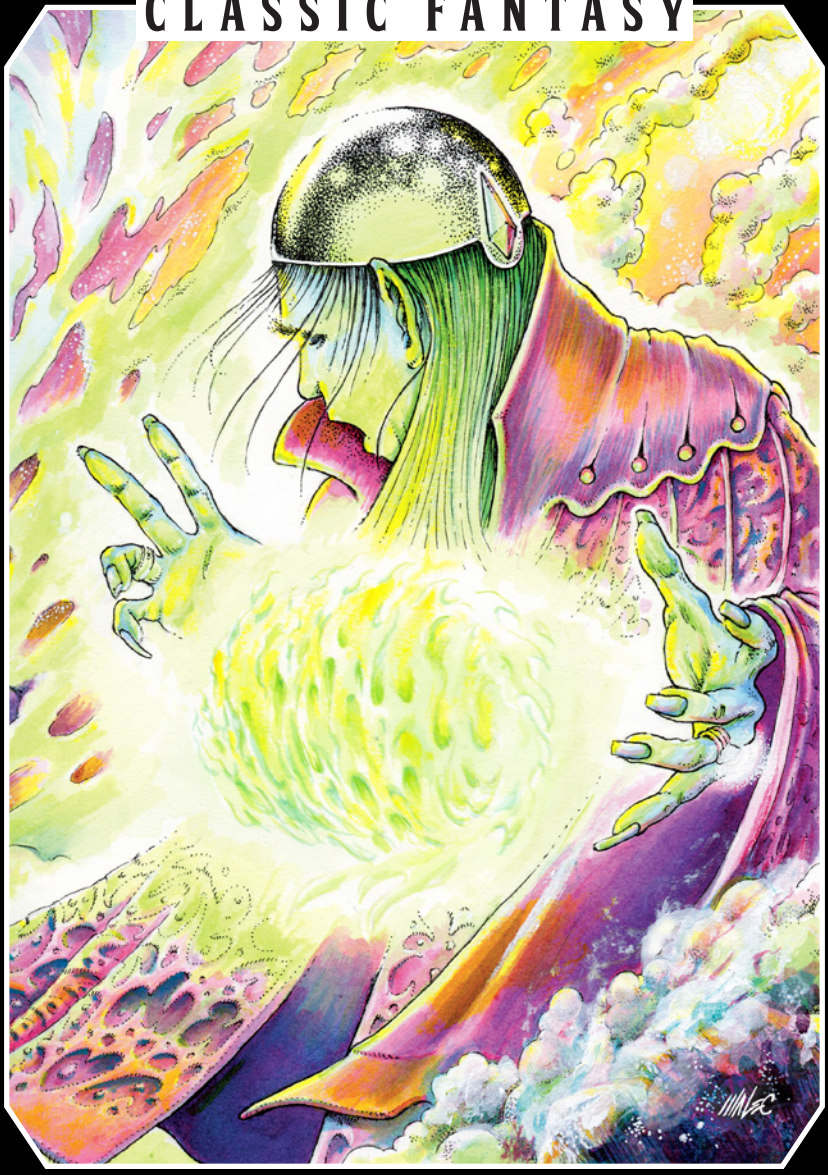
OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

CLASSIC FANTASY

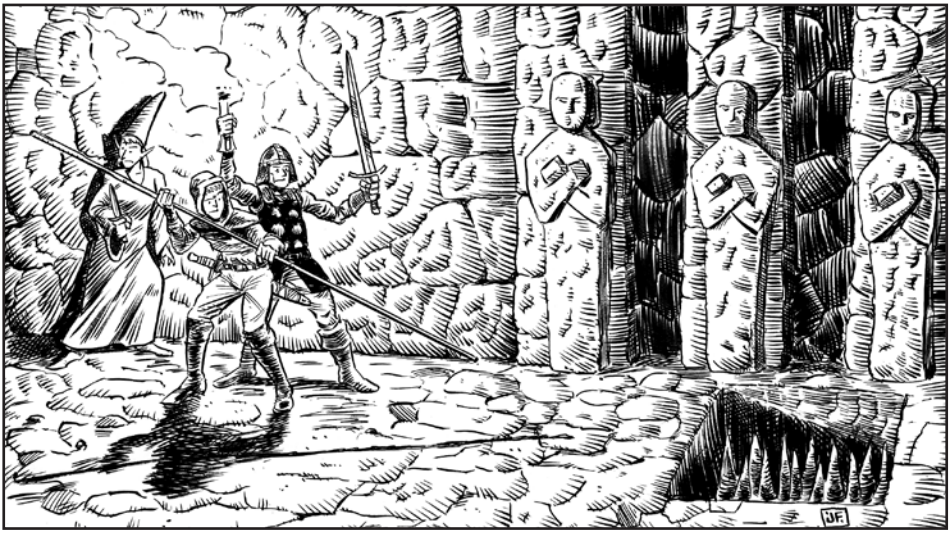


Basic Rules

OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

CLASSIC FANTASY

Basic Rules *v1.4*



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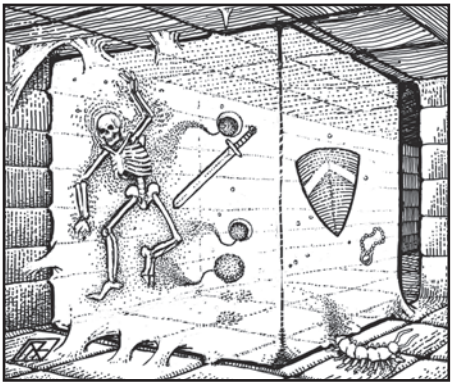

Thanks

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Introduction

About This Game

What is ***Old-School Essentials***?

► A role-playing game of ***fantastic adventure***, where players work together to overcome fearsome monsters, sinister plots, and deadly traps in search of wealth, power, and glory.

► An ***old-school*** role-playing game, styled after the beloved games of the 1970s and 1980s.

► A relatively ***rules-light*** game, where the rules are kept simple in order to let imagination and fast-paced action take the spotlight.

► A ***streamlined*** rules set, with the books carefully structured for maximum usability during play.

► A ***modular*** game that can be easily expanded for play in many different fantastic genres and game worlds.

The Basic Rules

This book is a free sample of the complete rules of the game, containing:

► The full introduction and character creation rules.

► The four core human classes: cleric, fighter, magic-user, thief.

► Full lists of adventuring equipment, weapons, and armour.

► The basic rules for dungeon adventuring, encounters, and combat.

► The full rules for spell casting, and the complete set of 1st level spells.

The Complete Rules

The complete game is available from **necroticgnome.com** in two forms:

► **The Rules Tome:** A deluxe, all-in-one, 288 page hardcover.

► **The Classic Game Set:** A fancy boxed set of five hardcover books.

The complete game contains:

► Full rules for adventuring in dungeons, in the wilderness, and on the high seas.

► 7 classes, including the surly dwarf, the noble elf, and the plucky halfling.

► 106 spells of 1st to 6th power level.

► Over 200 fearsome monsters.

► Over 150 classic magic items.

New to Old-School Games?

Newer RPGs (i.e. post-2000) tend to work from a different set of design principles and have somewhat different play expectations than old-school games.

Old-School Play Style

Players who are familiar with newer RPGs but not with the old-school style of play may find the following documents useful (both can be found online):

► *Principia Apocrypha*, by Ben Milton, Steven Lumpkin, and David Perry.

► *Quick Primer for Old School Gaming*, by Matthew Finch.

Ascending Armour Class

Players who are used to an Armour Class system where higher scores are better are advised to use the optional rule for Ascending Armour Class (***p9***).

Terminology

Basic Game Terminology

Referee
Also known as the *Game Master*. The person who designs the game world and runs game sessions for the other players, arbitrating the rules and determining the reactions of people and creatures encountered.

Players
Every other participant in the game. Each player usually runs a single character.

Player Character (PC)
The imagined character played by a player.

Party
The group of PCs who go on adventures together.

Adventure
A series of one or more game sessions during which the party explores a specific location or engages with a particular plot.

Campaign
A series of adventures, usually involving a consistent set of PCs and a consistent game world.

Non-Player Character (NPC)
Any other character encountered by the PCs during the game. All NPCs are played by the referee.

Monster
Any creature encountered by the party during an adventure. All monsters are played by the referee.

Dice Rolling Notation

Similar to many other RPGs, ***Old-School Essentials*** uses polyhedral dice, each referred to by the number of sides it has:

- **d4:** A four-sided die.
- **d6:** A normal six-sided die.
- **d8:** An eight-sided die.
- **d10:** A ten-sided die.
- **d12:** A twelve-sided die.
- **d20:** A twenty-sided die.

Multi-Dice Rolls
In situations where multiple dice should be rolled and the results summed, the number of dice is noted before the "d". For example, "3d6" indicates that three six-sided dice should be rolled and the results added together.

Modifiers
Flat modifiers to the roll are applied after the results of all dice have been summed. For example, "3d6+2" indicates that three six-sided dice should be rolled, the results added together, then 2 added on top.

"Natural" Rolls
The rules occasionally refer to the "natural" result of rolling dice (e.g. "a natural 20"). This means the number rolled on the die, before any modifiers are applied.

Percentile Rolls (d100)
A hundred-sided die (d100, sometimes noted as d%) can be mimicked using two d10s: the first treated as "tens" and the second treated as "ones". For example, a roll of 2 and 3 would be 23. If two 0s are rolled, the result counts as 100.

X-in-6 Rolls
Some rules specify an X-in-6 chance of success (e.g. 2-in-6, 3-in-6, etc.). This indicates that 1d6 should be rolled and the result compared against the specified chance. If the roll is less than or equal to the chance of success, the check succeeds.

Classic Fantasy Gaming

This book presents a sample of the rules required to run ***Old-School Essentials*** games in classic fantasy settings. The most fundamental elements of such settings are as follows.

Peril and Adventure

Players take on the role of people who are drawn to confront danger in search of wealth, ancient secrets, and wonder. These bold individuals are known as ***adventurers*** and are the focus of the game.

The danger and reward of adventure are most commonly found in two types of locations: ***wilderness*** and ***dungeons***.

Wilderness

Forbidden forests as old as the world, swamps haunted by the spirits of ancient tribes, wild mountain ranges, the uncharted reaches of the high seas. Any outdoor space where peril and adventure can be met is classified as wilderness.

Dungeons

Forsaken ruins hiding long-forgotten treasures, primal caverns where strange beasts dwell, subterranean cities of alien splendour and unimaginable wealth. Any indoor or subterranean space where peril and adventure can be met is classified as a dungeon.

The Fantastic

The rules assume a setting where PCs come into contact with the fantastic, otherworldly, weird, and wonderful.

Treasure

Hoards of long-forgotten gold, fabled objects of great magical power, artefacts crafted by the gods themselves. The promise of attaining treasures such as these—either for their fabulous material value or for their fantastic powers—is the lure that pulls many an adventurer into perilous realms.

Monsters

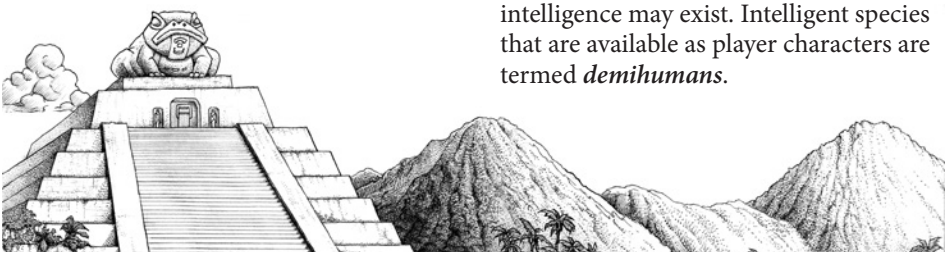
Terrible creatures older than time, fearsome mythical beasts, chimeric biological experiments, bands of monstrous beastmen, beings from otherworldly dimensions. Such inhuman creatures lurk in the wilderness and in dungeons, guarding wondrous treasures.

Magic

Forbidden practices of dark sorcery, rituals to invoke the gods, monsters summoned from weird dimensions, sites of eldritch power, objects bound with occult energies. Magic is a powerful tool that may be wielded by player characters, but also by their enemies!

Sentient Species

Fairies malevolent and kind, dwarves in subterranean kingdoms, bestial humanoids, mutants twisted by magic. While humans are typically the most widespread species in the game, other humanoids of equal (or perhaps greater!) intelligence may exist. Intelligent species that are available as player characters are termed ***demihumans***.



Other Books

A range of ***Old-School Essentials*** supplements are available, adding extra rules options, character classes, equipment, spells, monsters, and treasures to tailor the game to different settings, genres, and styles of play.

Mix and Match

All ***Old-School Essentials*** books are 100% compatible and can be freely mixed and matched! In this way, different settings and genres may be combined.

Roll Your Own

In addition to using the supplements published in the ***Old-School Essentials*** product line, groups may wish to create their own additional content, tailoring the game to their own needs.

House Rules

None of the rules presented in this book (or other ***Old-School Essentials*** books) are to be taken as "gospel". If the players and referee wish, any rule may be expanded, altered, or removed. Such tweaks to the rules are known as ***house rules***—many groups end up with their own unique way of playing, tailored to their particular tastes.

That said, the rules have been carefully designed and very thoroughly battle tested. Many groups will be perfectly happy with the rules as written.

Beginning players: Are advised to play with the rules as written for some time, before starting to change anything.

Compatibility

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

The Basic/Expert Rules

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

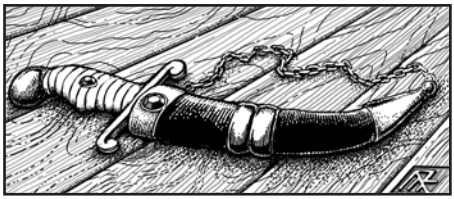
Heritage

The material presented in this book represents a 100% faithful restatement of the rules, character options, spells, monsters, and treasures from the classic Basic/Expert game.

It is worth noting that ***errors*** in the original Basic/Expert rules have not been slavishly reproduced—an effort has been made to correct obvious mistakes.

With the aim of increasing the playability of the game, areas of ambiguity or contradiction in the Basic/Expert core rules have also been clarified in ***Old-School Essentials***, while attempting to cleave as closely as possible to the apparent intent of the original rules.

For those with a passion for rules archaeology, a document detailing the clarifications that were made can be downloaded from **necroticgnome.com**.



Other Basic/Expert Games

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

Other Editions

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

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

Adaptation Guidelines

Concrete guidelines are beyond the scope of this introduction. However, a guide to adapting other, similar rules sets for use with this one is available as a free download from **necroticgnome.com** for those who want more information on this topic.

Player Characters

Game Statistics

Player characters are described, in game terms, by a set of statistics that define their abilities, strengths, and weaknesses in the game world.

Ability Scores

The basic physical and mental strengths and weaknesses of the character. There are 6 ability scores: ***Strength*** (abbreviated STR), ***Intelligence*** (INT), ***Wisdom*** (WIS), ***Dexterity*** (DEX), ***Constitution*** (CON), and ***Charisma*** (CHA). A character is ranked in each ability score by a number between 3–18. (3 being the worst score possible and 18 the best.)

Class

An adventuring profession to which the character belongs. A character's class defines their main abilities. See ***Character Classes, p16***.

Race

Unless a demihuman class is selected, the character is assumed to be human.

Level

The character's experience as an adventurer is denoted by their experience level. Characters typically start play at 1st level (the lowest level of adventurer) and can increase in level through successful adventuring. As a character goes up in level, they gain more powerful abilities, as defined by their class.

Experience Points (XP)

The character's advancement in the game is tracked by the accumulation of experience points. Experience points are awarded by the referee after a successful adventure. When the character has accumulated a certain number of experience points, the character's level increases. Each class specifies the number of experience points required to achieve each experience level.

Prime Requisite

The ability score (or scores) that are the most important to the character's class. The character's score in these abilities can affect the rate at which the character accumulates experience points.

Alignment

The character (and every other creature in the game world) is aligned with one of three cosmic principles: Law, Neutrality, or Chaos (see ***Alignment, p14***). This alignment determines how certain magic influences the character and should be used by the player as a guideline for role-playing the character.

Hit Points (hp)

The character's ability to avoid dying. The character has a ***maximum hit point total*** and a ***current hit point total***, which are tracked separately. When a character is harmed, their current hit point total is reduced. If this number reaches 0, the character is dead! Rest or healing can restore lost hit points (see ***p42***), but never above the character's maximum hit point total (this is only increased when the character increases in level).

Hit Dice (HD)

The number of dice used to determine the character's maximum hit point total. The character's level determines the number of Hit Dice and their class determines the type of dice rolled (i.e. d4, d6, d8). (Some classes also gain a flat bonus to hit points at certain levels.)

Armour Class (AC)

The character's ability to avoid damage in combat. AC is determined by the character's armour and their Dexterity score. Lower Armour Class scores are better, so bonuses decrease the character's AC and penalties increase it.

Dual format: The equivalent ascending AC is listed in square brackets, for groups using the optional rule for Ascending AC. (e.g. AC 5 [14]—an AC of 5, or 14 if using the optional rule for Ascending AC.)

Unarmoured AC: An unarmoured character has AC 9 [10].

Attack Roll "to Hit AC 0" (THAC0)

The character's ability to hit foes in combat, determined by their class and level. The THAC0 score indicates which row of the attack matrix (***p52***) to use when attacking. Lower THAC0 scores are better.

Dual format: The equivalent attack bonus is listed in square brackets, for groups using the optional rule for Ascending AC. (e.g. THAC0 15 [+4]—a THAC0 of 15, or an attack bonus of +4 if using the optional rule for Ascending AC.)

Attacking: The procedure for making attack rolls is described in ***Combat, p50***.

Saving Throw Values

The character's ability to avoid certain dangerous or detrimental effects. There are five saving throw categories: death (or poison), wands, paralysis (or petrification), breath attacks, spells (or magic rods or staves). The character's saving throw values are determined by class and level. See ***Saving Throws, p43*** for full details.

Ascending AC (Optional Rule)

Some groups are more familiar with an Armour Class system where higher scores are better. This system is known as Ascending Armour Class (abbreviated AAC) and works as follows:

► **Armour Class:** When using AAC, higher scores are better. Bonuses to Armour Class increase the AAC score and penalties decrease it.

► **Attack rolls:** When using AAC, the procedure for resolving attack rolls involves the use of an attack bonus instead of a THAC0 score and attack matrix.

Note: Using Ascending Armour Class results in very slightly different attack probabilities than when using the traditional approach of descending AC with an attack matrix.

Movement Rate

The speed at which the character can move when exploring, travelling, or during combat. Every character has a ***base movement rate*** and an ***encounter movement rate*** (noted in parentheses). The encounter movement rate is one third of the base movement rate. The default movement rate for characters is 120' (40')—a base movement rate of 120' and an encounter movement rate of 40'.

► **Overland:** The number of miles a character can travel in a day in the wilderness is determined by dividing their base movement rate by five.

► **Exploration:** When exploring unknown areas of a dungeon, characters can move their base movement rate in feet per turn (10 minutes).

Class Abilities

Finally, the character's class denotes a set of special abilities that the character may use, including the ability to use certain types of armour and weapons and to speak one or more languages.

Creating a Character

To create a character, you'll first need a character sheet—a sheet of paper on which to record all information about the new character.

A selection of different character sheet PDFs is available at **necroticgnome.com**. These may be downloaded and printed for use in your games.

1. Roll Ability Scores

Roll 3d6 for each of your character's ability scores: Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma. See ***Ability Scores, p12***.

Sub-Par Characters

If you roll a character with very poor ability scores—for example an 8 or less in every score or an extremely low rating in one ability—the referee may allow you to discard the character and start again.

2. Choose a Class

Select one of the classes available (see ***Character Classes, p16***), bearing in mind the minimum ability score requirements of some classes. The chosen class determines your character's race—unless a demihuman class is selected, the character is human.

3. Adjust Ability Scores

If you wish, you may raise your character's prime requisite(s) by lowering other (non-prime requisite) ability scores. For every 2 points by which an ability score is lowered, 1 point may be added to a prime requisite. The following restrictions apply:

- Only Strength, Intelligence, and Wisdom may be lowered in this way.
- No score may be lowered below 9.
- Some character classes may have additional constraints.

4. Note Ability Score Modifiers

Now that your character's ability scores are fixed, make a note of any associated bonuses or penalties (see overleaf).

5. Note Attack Values

The level progression chart for your character's class lists your THAC0 score. This indicates your chance of hitting opponents in combat, as determined by the ***Character Attack Matrix, p52***.

For quick reference, it is convenient to look up the values in the attack matrix row for your character's THAC0 (determined by class and level) and record them on your character sheet. 1st level characters have a THAC0 of 19 [0], resulting in the attack values shown below.

Ascending AC (Optional Rule)

If using the optional rule for Ascending AC (***p9***), record your attack bonus on your character sheet, instead of the attack matrix quick reference.

1st Level PC Attack Values

Attack Roll	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
AC Hit	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

6. Note Saving Throws and Class Abilities

Record any special abilities possessed by your character as a result of their class, as well as your character's saving throws. If your character has a spell book, ask your referee which spells are recorded in it. The referee may allow you to choose.

7. Roll Hit Points

Determine your character's hit points by rolling the die type appropriate to the chosen class. Modifiers for high or low Constitution apply (see ***Ability Scores, p12***). Your character always starts with at least 1 hit point, regardless of CON modifier.

Re-Rolling 1s and 2s (Optional Rule)

If your roll for hit points comes up 1 or 2 (before applying any CON modifier), the referee may allow you to re-roll. This is in order to increase the survivability of 1st level PCs.

8. Choose Alignment

Decide whether your character is Lawful, Neutral, or Chaotic (see ***Alignment, p14***) and note this on your character sheet.

9. Note Known Languages

Your character's class determines their native languages. This always includes the common tongue and the character's alignment language—see ***Languages, p14***. Characters with high INT may also choose additional languages from the list of languages available in the setting.

10. Buy Equipment

Your character starts play with 3d6 × 10 gold pieces (see ***Wealth, p15***). You may spend as much of this money as you wish to equip your character for adventure, consulting the equipment lists under ***Equipment, p24***.

Remember: Your chosen class may restrict your use of some equipment (e.g. weapons and armour).

11. Note Armour Class

Your character's Armour Class is determined by two factors:

- **Armour:** The armour worn determines your character's base AC. See the equipment lists under ***Equipment, p24***.
- **Dexterity:** See ***Ability Scores, p12***.

Unarmoured AC

If your character has no armour, their base AC is 9 [10].

12. Note Level and XP

Your character begins play at 1st level with 0 XP.

13. Name Character

Finally, choose a name for your character. You are now ready for adventure!

Ability Scores

A character's score in each ability determines whether they have any bonuses or penalties associated with various actions in the game. The tables opposite list the modifiers associated with each ability score, with the effects described below.

Strength (STR)

Brawn, muscle, and physical power.

► **Melee:** Is applied to attack and damage rolls with melee weapons.

► **Open doors:** The chance of success with attempts to force open a stuck door (see ***Dungeon Adventuring, p46***).

Intelligence (INT)

Learning, memory, and reasoning.

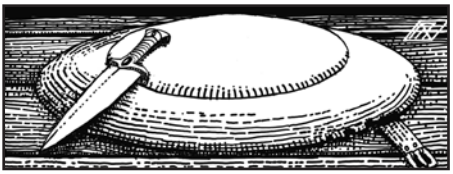
► **Spoken languages:** Denotes the number of languages the character can speak.

► **Literacy:** Indicates the character's ability to read and write their native languages.

Wisdom (WIS)

Willpower, common sense, perception, and intuition.

► **Magic saves:** Is applied to saving throws (see ***p43***) versus magical effects. This does not normally include saves against breath attacks, but may apply to any other saving throw category.



Dexterity (DEX)

Agility, reflexes, speed, and balance.

► **AC:** Modifies the character's AC (a bonus lowers AC, a penalty raises it).

► **Missile:** Applied to attack rolls (but not damage rolls) with ranged weapons.

► **Initiative:** Modifies the character's initiative roll, if the optional rule for individual initiative is used (see ***Combat, p50***).

Constitution (CON)

Health, stamina, and endurance.

► **Hit points:** Applies when rolling a character's hit points (i.e. at 1st level and every time a level is gained thereafter). A character always gains at least 1 hit point per Hit Die, regardless of CON modifier.

Charisma (CHA)

Force of personality, persuasiveness, personal magnetism, physical attractiveness, and ability to lead.

► **NPC reactions:** Applies when hiring retainers and when interacting with monsters.

► **Max # of retainers:** Determines the number of retainers a character may have at any one time.

► **Retainer loyalty:** Determines retainers' loyalty to the character.

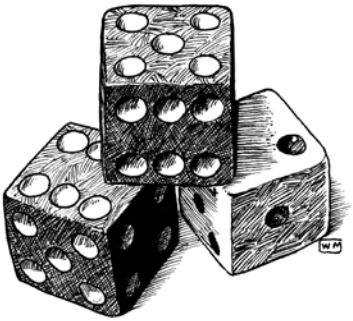
Prime Requisite

Each character class has one or more prime requisites—ability scores of special importance to that class' function. A character's score in their prime requisites affects how quickly they gain XP.

► **XP modifier:** Applied to all XP awarded to characters with a single prime requisite. The modifiers for classes with multiple prime requisites are noted in the class description.

Strength Modifiers

STR	Melee	Open Doors
3	–3	1-in-6
4–5	–2	1-in-6
6–8	–1	1-in-6
9–12	None	2-in-6
13–15	+1	3-in-6
16–17	+2	4-in-6
18	+3	5-in-6



Intelligence Modifiers

INT	Spoken Languages	Literacy
3	Native (broken speech)	Illiterate
4–5	Native	Illiterate
6–8	Native	Basic
9–12	Native	Literate
13–15	Native + 1 additional	Literate
16–17	Native + 2 additional	Literate
18	Native + 3 additional	Literate

Wisdom Modifiers

WIS	Magic Saves
3	–3
4–5	–2
6–8	–1
9–12	None
13–15	+1
16–17	+2
18	+3

Dexterity Modifiers

DEX	AC	Missile	Initiative
3	–3	–3	–2
4–5	–2	–2	–1
6–8	–1	–1	–1
9–12	None	None	None
13–15	+1	+1	+1
16–17	+2	+2	+1
18	+3	+3	+2

Constitution Modifiers

CON	Hit Points
3	–3
4–5	–2
6–8	–1
9–12	None
13–15	+1
16–17	+2
18	+3

Charisma Modifiers

		Retainers	
CHA	NPC Reactions	Max #	Loyalty
3	–2	1	4
4–5	–1	2	5
6–8	–1	3	6
9–12	None	4	7
13–15	+1	5	8
16–17	+1	6	9
18	+2	7	10

Prime Requisite Modifiers

Prime Requisite	XP Modifier
3–5	–20%
6–8	–10%
9–12	None
13–15	+5%
16–18	+10%

Alignment

All beings, whether PCs, NPCs, or monsters, adhere to one of three philosophies or spheres of behaviour, known as alignments. These spheres are Law, Neutrality, and Chaos. A player must choose one of these paths when creating a character.

Law: Lawful beings believe in truth and justice. To this end, they will follow laws and believe all things must adhere to order. Lawful beings also believe in sacrifice to a greater good and will choose the good of a larger group over the good of an individual.

Neutrality: Neutral beings believe in a balance between the ideas of Law and Chaos and, in their actions, tend to do what will serve themselves. They might commit good or evil acts in order to further their own ends and generally will not put others' needs ahead of their own.

Chaos: Chaotic beings are in direct opposition to Law. These beings should seldom be trusted, for they tend to act in "evil" ways and are utterly selfish. Chaotic characters believe in chance and that there is no innate order to life.

Revealing Alignment

The player must inform the referee of their character's alignment, but does not have to tell other players.

Role-Playing Alignment

When determining the character's actions, players should do their best to adhere to their chosen alignment. The referee will take note when a character's behaviour deviates too much from the norm of the chosen alignment and may assign a new alignment more appropriate to actual character actions. Deviation from alignment may also be penalised, as the referee sees fit.

Languages

The native languages spoken by a player character are determined by the character's class. These typically include the common tongue and an alignment language. Characters with high INT may learn additional languages (see ***Ability Scores, p12***).

The Common Tongue

The common tongue (sometimes simply called ***Common***) is a language which is widespread among intelligent species. All player character races—as well as many monsters—are able to speak Common.

In some settings, the referee may rule that different cultures in the campaign world have different languages, in which case a particular language must be chosen instead of Common.

Alignment Languages

All intelligent beings know a secret, unwritten language of gestures, signs, and code words associated with their alignment. This secret language allows beings of the same alignment to communicate. Beings of another alignment will recognise when an alignment language is being used, but will not understand. It is not possible to learn another alignment language except by changing alignment, in which case the former language is forgotten.

Other Languages

Many demihuman and intelligent monster species have their own language, which player characters may be able to learn. The exact languages that are spoken depend on the setting, as determined by the referee.

Coin Conversion Rates					
	1 pp	1 gp	1 ep	1 sp	1 cp
Value in pp	1	1/5	1/10	1/50	1/500
Value in gp	5	1	1/2	1/10	1/100
Value in ep	10	2	1	1/5	1/50
Value in sp	50	10	5	1	1/10
Value in cp	500	100	50	10	1

Experience

All characters who make it through an adventure alive receive experience points (XP), awarded by the referee (see ***p39***). XP is gained from two sources: treasure recovered and monsters defeated.

Prime Requisite Modifiers

Characters receive an XP bonus or penalty based on their score in their class' prime requisites (see ***Ability Scores, p12***). This modifier is applied to the grand total XP a particular character receives at the end of an adventure.

Levelling Up

When a character gains enough XP to reach the next experience level, the player should consult the description of the character's class and note any improvements in saving throws, attack probabilities, spells per day, and other class abilities. If the character's Hit Dice increase, a new Hit Die of the specified type should be rolled and the result added to the character's maximum hit point total.

Maximum XP in One Session

Characters cannot advance more than one level in one session. Any additional XP that would take a character two or more levels above their current level are lost, leaving the character at 1 XP below the total for the next level.

Wealth

Successful characters accumulate wealth from the spoils of their adventures. Treasure may take many forms, but often the most useful form of treasure is money.

Money

The most common coin is the gold piece (gp). Coins made of other metals—platinum (pp), electrum (ep), silver (sp), and copper (cp)—are also used. The conversion rates of coins are shown above.

Starting Money

PCs begin play with 3d6 × 10 gold pieces.

Inheritance

Faced with the possibility of character death, players may wish to create a will for their characters, to leave wealth behind for an heir. If the referee allows this, the following stipulations apply:

- **Tax:** Any treasure left as an inheritance will be taxed at 10%.
- **Heir:** A character's heir must be a new 1st level character.
- **Once only:** A player may only leave a character inheritance once.

Character Classes

Cleric

Requirements: None
Prime requisite: WIS
Hit Dice: 1d6
Maximum level: 14
Armour: Any, including shields
Weapons: Any blunt weapons
Languages: Alignment, Common

Clerics are adventurers who have sworn to serve a deity. They are trained for battle and channel the power of their deity.

Combat

Clerics can use all types of armour. Strict holy doctrine prevents clerics' use of weapons that have a sharp, cutting edge or stabbing point. They may use the following weapons: club, mace, sling, staff, warhammer.

Divine Magic

See ***Magic, p28*** for full details on divine magic.

Holy symbol: A cleric must carry a holy symbol (see ***Equipment, p24***).

Deity disfavour: Clerics must be faithful to the tenets of their alignment, clergy, and religion. Clerics who fall from favour with their deity may incur penalties.

Magical research: A cleric of any level may spend time and money on magical research. This allows them to create new spells or other magical effects associated with their deity. When a cleric reaches 9th level, they are also able to create magic items.

Spell casting: Once a cleric has proven their faith (from 2nd level), the character may pray to receive spells. The power and number of spells available to a cleric are determined by the character's experience level. The list of spells available to clerics is found on ***Cleric Spells, p31***.

Using magic items: As spell casters, clerics can use magic scrolls of spells on their spell list. They can also use items that may only be used by divine spell casters (e.g. some magic staves).

Turning the Undead

Clerics can invoke the power of their deity to repel undead monsters encountered. To turn the undead, the player rolls 2d6. The referee then consults the table opposite, comparing the roll against the HD of the type of undead monsters targeted.

Successful Turning

If the turning attempt succeeds, the player must roll 2d6 again to determine the number of HD affected (turned or destroyed).

Turned undead: Will leave the area, if possible, and will not harm or make contact with the cleric.

Destroyed undead (result of D): Are instantly and permanently annihilated.

Excess: Rolled Hit Dice that are not sufficient to affect a monster are wasted.

Minimum effect: At least one undead monster will always be affected on a successful turning.

Mixed groups: If turn undead is used against a mixed group of undead monsters of different types, those with the lowest HD are affected first.

Cleric Level Progression

				Saving Throws					Spells				
Level	XP	HD	THAC0	D	W	P	B	S	1	2	3	4	5
1	0	1d6	19 [0]	11	12	14	16	15	–	–	–	–	–
2	1,500	2d6	19 [0]	11	12	14	16	15	1	–	–	–	–
3	3,000	3d6	19 [0]	11	12	14	16	15	2	–	–	–	–
4	6,000	4d6	19 [0]	11	12	14	16	15	2	1	–	–	–
5	12,000	5d6	17 [+2]	9	10	12	14	12	2	2	–	–	–
6	25,000	6d6	17 [+2]	9	10	12	14	12	2	2	1	1	–
7	50,000	7d6	17 [+2]	9	10	12	14	12	2	2	2	1	1
8	100,000	8d6	17 [+2]	9	10	12	14	12	3	3	2	2	1
9	200,000	9d6	14 [+5]	6	7	9	11	9	3	3	3	2	2
10	300,000	9d6+1*	14 [+5]	6	7	9	11	9	4	4	3	3	2
11	400,000	9d6+2*	14 [+5]	6	7	9	11	9	4	4	4	3	3
12	500,000	9d6+3*	14 [+5]	6	7	9	11	9	5	5	4	4	3
13	600,000	9d6+4*	12 [+7]	3	5	7	8	7	5	5	5	4	4
14	700,000	9d6+5*	12 [+7]	3	5	7	8	7	6	5	5	5	4

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

D: Death / poison; **W:** Wands; **P:** Paralysis / petrify; **B:** Breath attacks; **S:** Spells / rods / staves.

Turning Table Results

–: The turning fails.

Number: If the 2d6 turning roll is higher or equal, the turning attempt succeeds.

T: The turning succeeds.

D: The turning succeeds; the monsters are destroyed, not simply caused to flee.

After Reaching 9th Level

A cleric may establish or build a stronghold. So long as the cleric is currently in favour with their god, a stronghold may be bought or built at half the normal price, due to divine intervention.

Once a stronghold is established, the cleric will attract followers (5d6 × 10 fighters of level 1–2). These troops are completely devoted to the cleric, never checking morale. The referee decides which proportions of followers are 1st and 2nd level and which are bowmen, infantry, etc.

Turning the Undead

	Hit Dice of Monster Type†							
Level	1	2	2*	3	4	5	6	7-9
1	7	9	11	–	–	–	–	–
2	T	7	9	11	–	–	–	–
3	T	T	7	9	11	–	–	–
4	D	T	T	7	9	11	–	–
5	D	D	T	T	7	9	11	–
6	D	D	D	T	T	7	9	11
7	D	D	D	D	T	T	7	9
8	D	D	D	D	D	T	T	7
9	D	D	D	D	D	D	T	T
10	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	T
11+	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D

* 2 HD monsters with a special ability (i.e. with an asterisk next to their HD rating, in the monster description).

† At the referee's option, the table may be expanded to include more powerful types of undead monsters.

Fighter

Requirements: None
Prime requisite: STR
Hit Dice: 1d8
Maximum level: 14
Armour: Any, including shields
Weapons: Any
Languages: Alignment, Common

Fighters are adventurers dedicated to mastering the arts of combat and war. In a group of adventurers, the role of fighters is to battle monsters and to defend other characters.

Combat

Fighters can use all types of weapons and armour.

Stronghold

Any time a fighter wishes (and has sufficient money), they can build a castle or stronghold and control the surrounding lands.

After Reaching 9th Level

A fighter may be granted a title such as Baron or Baroness. The land under the fighter's control is then known as a Barony.

Fighter Level Progression

				Saving Throws				
Level	XP	HD	THAC0	D	W	P	B	S
1	0	1d8	19 [0]	12	13	14	15	16
2	2,000	2d8	19 [0]	12	13	14	15	16
3	4,000	3d8	19 [0]	12	13	14	15	16
4	8,000	4d8	17 [+2]	10	11	12	13	14
5	16,000	5d8	17 [+2]	10	11	12	13	14
6	32,000	6d8	17 [+2]	10	11	12	13	14
7	64,000	7d8	14 [+5]	8	9	10	10	12
8	120,000	8d8	14 [+5]	8	9	10	10	12
9	240,000	9d8	14 [+5]	8	9	10	10	12
10	360,000	9d8+2*	12 [+7]	6	7	8	8	10
11	480,000	9d8+4*	12 [+7]	6	7	8	8	10
12	600,000	9d8+6*	12 [+7]	6	7	8	8	10
13	720,000	9d8+8*	10 [+9]	4	5	6	5	8
14	840,000	9d8+10*	10 [+9]	4	5	6	5	8

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

D: Death / poison; **W:** Wands; **P:** Paralysis / petrify; **B:** Breath attacks; **S:** Spells / rods / staves.

Magic-User

Requirements: None
Prime requisite: INT
Hit Dice: 1d4
Maximum level: 14
Armour: None
Weapons: Dagger
Languages: Alignment, Common

Magic-users are adventurers whose study of arcane secrets has taught them how to cast spells. Magic-users are able to cast a greater number of increasingly powerful spells as they advance in level.

Arcane Magic

See ***Magic, p28*** for full details on arcane magic.

Magical research: A magic-user of any level may spend time and money on magical research. This allows them to add new spells to their spell book and to research other magical effects. When a magic-user reaches 9th level, they are also able to create magic items.

Spell casting: Magic-users carry spell books containing the formulae for arcane spells. The spell casting chart (opposite) shows both the number of spells in the magic-user's spell book and the number they may memorize, determined by the character's experience level. Thus, a 1st level magic-user has one spell in their spell book, selected by the referee (who may allow the player to choose). The list of spells available to magic-users is found on ***Magic-User Spells, p31***.

Using magic items: As spell casters, magic-users are able to use magic scrolls of spells on their spell list. They can also use items that may only be used by arcane spell casters (e.g. magic wands).

Combat

Magic-users can only use daggers and are unable to use shields or wear any kind of armour. This makes them very vulnerable in combat.

After Reaching 11th Level

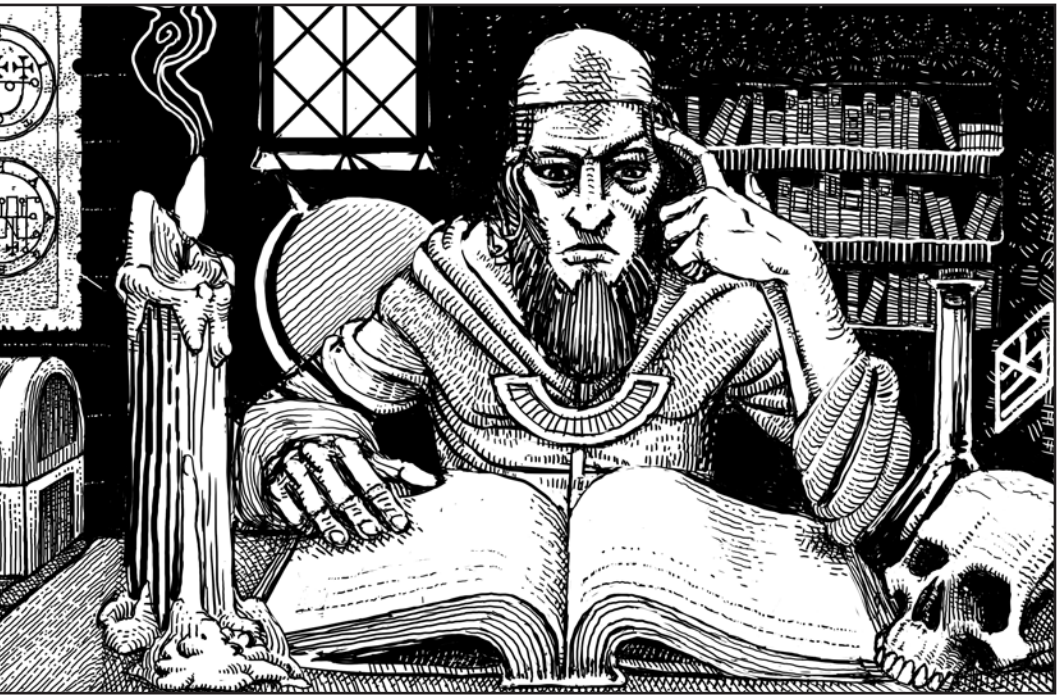
A magic-user may build a stronghold, often a great tower. 1d6 apprentices of levels 1–3 will then arrive to study under the magic-user.

Magic-User Level Progression

				Saving Throws					Spells					
Level	XP	HD	THAC0	D	W	P	B	S	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	0	1d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	1	–	–	–	–	–
2	2,500	2d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	–	–	–	–	–
3	5,000	3d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	1	–	–	–	–
4	10,000	4d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	2	–	–	–	–
5	20,000	5d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	2	1	–	–	–
6	40,000	6d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	2	2	2	–	–	–
7	80,000	7d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	2	2	1	–	–
8	150,000	8d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	3	2	2	–	–
9	300,000	9d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	3	3	2	1	–
10	450,000	9d4+1*	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	3	3	3	2	–
11	600,000	9d4+2*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	3	3	3	2	1
12	750,000	9d4+3*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	4	3	3	3	2
13	900,000	9d4+4*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	4	4	3	3	3
14	1,050,000	9d4+5*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	4	4	4	3	3

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

D: Death / poison; **W:** Wands;
P: Paralysis / petrify; **B:** Breath attacks;
S: Spells / rods / staves.



Thief

Requirements: None
Prime requisite: DEX
Hit Dice: 1d4
Maximum level: 14
Armour: Leather, no shields
Weapons: Any
Languages: Alignment, Common

Thieves are adventurers who live by their skills of deception and stealth. Their range of unique skills makes them very handy companions in adventures. However, thieves are not always to be trusted.

Adjust ability scores: In step 3 of character creation, thieves may not lower STR.

Back-stab

When attacking an unaware opponent from behind, a thief receives a +4 bonus to hit and doubles any damage dealt.

Combat

Because of their need for stealth and free movement, thieves cannot wear armour heavier than leather and cannot use shields. They can use any weapon.

Read Languages

A thief of 4th level or higher can read non-magical text in any language (including dead languages and basic codes) with 80% probability. If the roll does not succeed, the thief may not try to read that particular text again until they reach a higher level of experience.

Scroll Use

A thief of 10th level or higher can cast arcane spells from scrolls. There is a 10% chance of error: the spell does not function as expected and creates an unusual or deleterious effect.

Thief Skills

Thieves can use the following skills, with the chance of success shown opposite:

- **Climb sheer surfaces (CS):** A roll is required for each 100' to be climbed. If the roll fails, the thief falls at the halfway point, suffering falling damage.
- **Find or remove treasure traps (TR):** A roll is required to find a treasure trap and then another to remove it. This may be attempted only once per trap.
- **Hear noise (HN):** In a quiet environment (e.g. not in combat), a thief may attempt to listen at a door or to hear the sounds of something (e.g. a wandering monster) approaching.
- **Hide in shadows (HS):** Requires the thief to be motionless—attacking or moving while hiding is not possible.
- **Move silently (MS):** A thief may attempt to sneak past enemies unnoticed.
- **Open locks (OL):** Requires thieves' tools (see ***Equipment, p24***). A thief can only try this skill once per lock. If the roll fails, the thief may not try the same lock again before gaining an experience level.
- **Pick pockets (PP):** If the victim is above 5th level, the thief's roll is penalised by 5% for every level above 5th. There is always at least a 1% chance of failure. A roll of more than twice the percentage required for success means that the attempted theft is noticed. The referee should determine the reaction of the victim (possibly using the reaction table under ***Encounters, p48***).

After Reaching 9th Level

A thief can establish a thief den, attracting 2d6 apprentices of 1st level. These thieves will serve the character with some reliability; however, should any be arrested or killed, the PC will not be able to attract apprentices to replace them. A successful thief might use these followers to start a Thieves' Guild.

Thief Level Progression

Level	XP	HD	THAC0	Saving Throws D	W	P	B	S
1	0	1d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15
2	1,200	2d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15
3	2,400	3d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15
4	4,800	4d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15
5	9,600	5d4	17 [+2]	12	13	11	14	13
6	20,000	6d4	17 [+2]	12	13	11	14	13
7	40,000	7d4	17 [+2]	12	13	11	14	13
8	80,000	8d4	17 [+2]	12	13	11	14	13
9	160,000	9d4	14 [+5]	10	11	9	12	10
10	280,000	9d4+2*	14 [+5]	10	11	9	12	10
11	400,000	9d4+4*	14 [+5]	10	11	9	12	10
12	520,000	9d4+6*	14 [+5]	10	11	9	12	10
13	640,000	9d4+8*	12 [+7]	8	9	7	10	8
14	760,000	9d4+10*	12 [+7]	8	9	7	10	8

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

D: Death / poison; **W:** Wands; **P:** Paralysis / petrify; **B:** Breath attacks; **S:** Spells / rods / staves.

Thief Skills Chance of Success

Level	CS	TR	HN	HS	MS	OL	PP
1	87	10	1–2	10	20	15	20
2	88	15	1–2	15	25	20	25
3	89	20	1–3	20	30	25	30
4	90	25	1–3	25	35	30	35
5	91	30	1–3	30	40	35	40
6	92	40	1–3	36	45	45	45
7	93	50	1–4	45	55	55	55
8	94	60	1–4	55	65	65	65
9	95	70	1–4	65	75	75	75
10	96	80	1–4	75	85	85	85
11	97	90	1–5	85	95	95	95
12	98	95	1–5	90	96	96	105
13	99	97	1–5	95	98	97	115
14	99	99	1–5	99	99	99	125

Rolling Skill Checks

Hear noise: Is rolled on 1d6. If the roll is within the listed range of numbers, the skill succeeds.

Other skills: Are rolled on d%, with a result of less than or equal to the listed percentage indicating success.

Player Knowledge

The referee should roll for hear noise, hide in shadows, and move silently on the player's behalf, as the thief does not immediately know if the attempt was successful. If a hide in shadows or move silently roll fails, the referee knows that the thief has been noticed and should determine enemies' actions appropriately.

Equipment

Adventuring Gear

Adventuring Gear	
Item	**Cost (gp)**
Backpack	5
Crowbar	10
Garlic	5
Grappling hook	25
Hammer (small)	2
Holy symbol	25
Holy water (vial)	25
Iron spikes (12)	1
Lantern	10
Mirror (hand-sized, steel)	5
Oil (1 flask)	2
Pole (10' long, wooden)	1
Rations (iron, 7 days)	15
Rations (standard, 7 days)	5
Rope (50')	1
Sack (large)	2
Sack (small)	1
Stakes (3) and mallet	3
Thieves' tools	25
Tinder box (flint & steel)	3
Torches (6)	1
Waterskin	1
Wine (2 pints)	1
Wolfsbane (1 bunch)	10

Descriptions

Backpack: Has two straps and can be worn on the back, keeping the hands free. Holds up to 400 coins.

Crowbar: 2–3' long and made of solid iron. Can be used for forcing doors and other objects open.

Grappling hook: Has 3 or 4 prongs. Can be used for anchoring a rope.

Hammer: Can be used for construction or as a mallet with iron or wooden spikes.

Holy symbol: A divine spell caster is required to own a holy symbol of their deity, often worn as a necklace. Each religion has its own holy symbol.

Holy water: Water that has been blessed by a holy person. It is used in some religious rituals and inflicts damage on undead monsters (see ***Weapon Combat Stats, p27***). Holy water does not retain its power if stored in any other container than the special vials it is blessed in.

Iron spikes: May be used for wedging doors open or shut (see ***Dungeon Adventuring, p46***), as an anchor to attach a rope to, and many other purposes.

Lantern: Can be closed to hide the light. Burns one oil flask every four hours (24 turns). Casts light in a 30' radius.

Mirror: Useful for looking around corners or for reflecting a gaze attack.

Oil flask: A flask of oil fuels a lantern for four hours (24 turns). In addition to fuelling lanterns, oil can be used as a weapon:

- **Throwing:** An oil flask may be lit on fire and thrown (see ***Weapon Combat Stats, p27***).
- **Pools:** Oil that is poured on the ground and lit covers a diameter of 3 feet and burns for 1 turn, inflicting damage on any character or monster moving through the pool.
- **Immunity:** Burning oil does not harm monsters that have a natural flame attack.

Pole, 10': A 2" thick wooden pole useful for poking and prodding suspicious items in a dungeon.

Rations, iron: Dried and preserved food to be carried on long voyages when securing fresh food may be uncertain.

Rations, standard: Fresh, unpreserved food.

Rope: Can hold the weight of approximately three human-sized beings.

Sack, large: Can hold up to 600 coins.

Sack, small: Can hold up to 200 coins.

Stakes and mallet: A wooden mallet and three 18" long stakes. Valuable when confronting vampires.

Thieves' tools: This kit contains all of the tools needed to pick locks.

Other Equipment

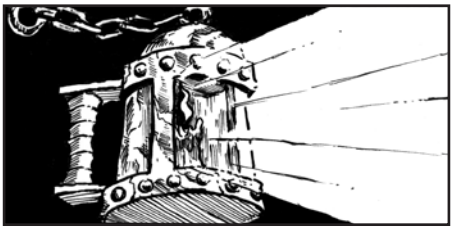
The items detailed in this section are those most commonly available for purchase. Should PCs wish to purchase items not on these lists, the referee may use the listed items as guidelines for determining the prices and characteristics of new items, including combat statistics (if appropriate).

Tinder box: Used to light fires, including torches. Using a tinder box takes one round. There is a 2-in-6 chance of success per round.

Torch: A torch burns for 1 hour (6 turns), clearly illuminating a 30' radius. Torches may also be used in combat (see ***Weapon Combat Stats, p27***).

Waterskin: This container, made of hide, will hold 2 pints (1 quart) of fluid.

Wolfsbane: This herb can be used to repel lycanthropes. The creature must be hit with the herb in melee combat.



Weapons and Armour

Weapons

Weapon	Cost (gp)	Weight (Coins)
Battle axe	7	50
Club	3	50
Crossbow	30	50
Dagger	3	10
Hand axe	4	30
Javelin	1	20
Lance	5	120
Long bow	40	30
Mace	5	30
Polearm	7	150
Short bow	25	30
Short sword	7	30
Silver dagger	30	10
Sling	2	20
Spear	3	30
Staff	2	40
Sword	10	60
Two-handed sword	15	150
Warhammer	5	30

Ammunition

Ammunition	Cost (gp)
Arrows (quiver of 20)	5
Crossbow bolts (case of 30)	10
Silver tipped arrow (1)	5
Sling stones	Free

Armour

Armour	AC	Cost (gp)	Weight (Coins)
Leather	7 [12]	20	200
Chainmail	5 [14]	40	400
Plate mail	3 [16]	60	500
Shield	+1 bonus	10	100

Encumbrance (Optional Rule)

If the optional rules for encumbrance are used (see ***Encumbrance, p41***), armour and weapons carried are treated as follows.

Option 1: Basic Encumbrance

Leather armour counts as ***light armour***, chainmail and plate mail count as ***heavy armour***.

Option 2: Detailed Encumbrance

The listed weight of armour and weapons is tracked. The listed weight of missile weapons already includes the weight of the ammunition and its container.

Weapon Combat Stats		
Weapon	**Damage**	**Qualities**
Battle axe	1d8	Melee, Slow, Two-handed
Club	1d4	Blunt, Melee
Crossbow	1d6	Missile (5'–80' / 81'–160' / 161'–240'), Reload, Slow, Two-handed
Dagger	1d4	Melee, Missile (5'–10' / 11'–20' / 21'–30')
Hand axe	1d6	Melee, Missile (5'–10' / 11'–20' / 21'–30')
Holy water vial	1d8	Missile (5'–10' / 11'–30' / 31'–50'), Splash weapon
Javelin	1d4	Missile (5'–30' / 31'–60' / 61'–90')
Lance	1d6	Charge, Melee
Long bow	1d6	Missile (5'–70' / 71'–140' / 141'–210'), Two-handed
Mace	1d6	Blunt, Melee
Oil flask, burning	1d8	Missile (5'–10' / 11'–30' / 31'–50'), Splash weapon
Polearm	1d10	Brace, Melee, Slow, Two-handed
Short bow	1d6	Missile (5'–50' / 51'–100' / 101'–150'), Two-handed
Short sword	1d6	Melee
Silver dagger	1d4	Melee, Missile (5'–10' / 11'–20' / 21'–30')
Sling	1d4	Blunt, Missile (5'–40' / 41'–80' / 81'–160')
Spear	1d6	Brace, Melee, Missile (5'–20' / 21'–40' / 41'–60')
Staff	1d4	Blunt, Melee, Slow, Two-handed
Sword	1d8	Melee
Torch	1d4	Melee
Two-handed sword	1d10	Melee, Slow, Two-handed
Warhammer	1d6	Blunt, Melee

Damage: Die rolled when using the optional rule for variable weapon damage (see ***Combat, p50***).

Weapon Qualities

Blunt: May be used by clerics.

Brace: Bracing against the ground doubles damage against charging monsters.

Charge: On horseback, moving at least 60' in a round and attacking doubles any damage done with a successful hit.

Melee: Close quarters weapon (5' or less).

Missile: Thrown or fired weapon (greater than 5' distance). The distances for short (+1 to hit), medium, and long (–1 to hit) range are shown in parentheses.

Reload (optional rule): Requires a round to reload between shots; can only be fired every second round.

Slow: The character acts last in each combat round (see ***Combat, p50***).

Splash weapon: On a successful attack, the container smashes and douses the target with the liquid. The listed damage is inflicted for two rounds, as the liquid drips off.

Two-handed: Requires both hands; the character cannot use a shield.

Magic

Spells

Some character classes have the ability to memorize and cast magical spells. A spell consists of a pattern of magical energy memorized in a character's mind. When a spell is cast, the spell is erased from the character's mind until it is memorized again.

Arcane and divine magic: Spells are either granted by a deity or higher power (***divine magic***) or learned by esoteric study (***arcane magic***).

Spell list: The character's class determines which spells they can cast. Each class has an associated list of spells.

Spells in memory: The character's level determines how many spells they can memorize at one time.

Reversible spells: Some spells are reversible; this is indicated in each spell's description.

Memorizing Spells

Rest and time requirements: A spell caster can memorize new spells after an uninterrupted night's sleep. It takes one hour to memorize all spells the character is capable of memorizing.

Duplicate spells: A character may memorize the same spell more than once, as long as they are capable of memorizing more than one spell of the given level.

Casting Spells

A memorized spell may be cast by precisely replicating the required set of hand gestures and mystical spoken words.

Once only: When a spell is cast, knowledge of the spell is erased from the mind of the caster until it is memorized again.

Freedom: The character must be able to speak and move their hands. A spell caster cannot cast spells if gagged, bound, or in an area of magical silence.

Line of sight: Unless noted in a spell's description, the intended target (a specific monster, character, object, or area of effect) must be visible to the caster.

Spell Effects

Selecting targets: Some spells affect multiple targets, either by area or by Hit Dice total. If the spell description does not specify how targets are selected, the referee must decide whether they are selected randomly, by the caster, etc.

Concentration: Some spells specify that the caster must concentrate in order to maintain the magical effect. Unless the spell description states otherwise, performing any other action or being distracted (e.g. attacked) causes concentration to end.

Cumulative effects: Multiple spells cannot be used to increase the same ability (e.g. bonuses to attack rolls, AC, damage rolls, saving throws, etc.). Spells that affect different abilities can be combined. Spells can be combined with the effects of magical items.

Arcane Magic

Memorizing Spells

Arcane spell casters memorize spells from spell books (see overleaf) and are thus limited to choosing from the spells in their spell book, which must be at hand.

Reversing Spells

The normal or reversed form of a spell must be selected when the spell is memorized. An arcane spell caster may memorize both forms of a spell if the character is able to memorize more than one spell of the given level.

Divine Magic

Memorizing Spells

Divine spell casters memorize spells through prayer to their gods. When praying for spells, divine spell casters may choose any spells in their class' spell list that they are of high enough level to cast.

Reversing Spells

Divine spell casters can cast the reversed version of a spell by speaking the words and performing the gestures backwards when it is cast.

Deity Disfavour

Divine spell casters must be faithful to the tenets of their alignment, clergy, and religion. If the character ever falls from favour with their deity, penalties (determined by the referee) may be imposed. These may include penalties to attack (–1), a reduction in spells, or being sent on a perilous quest. In order to regain favour, the character must perform some great deed for their deity (as determined by the referee), for example: donating magic items or gold, constructing a temple, converting many people to the religion, vanquishing a powerful enemy of the deity, etc.

Spells and Deity Alignment

A divine spell caster may draw disfavour from their deity when casting spells (or their reversed versions) whose effects go against the deity's alignment:

- **Lawful characters:** Will only use reversed spells in dire circumstances.
- **Chaotic characters:** Will usually use reversed spells, only using the normal versions of spells to benefit allies of their religion.
- **Neutral characters:** Will favour either normal or reversed spells, depending on the deity served (no deity favours both reversed and normal spells).

Spell Books

Arcane spell casters record the spells that they know in a spell book.

Number of spells: A character's spell book contains exactly the number of spells that the character is capable of memorizing (as determined by the character's class and level).

Beginning Spells

Arcane spell casters begin play with as many spells in their spell book as they are able to memorize. The referee may choose these spells or may allow the player to select.

Adding Spells

When the number of spells an arcane spell caster can memorize increases (e.g. by gaining an experience level), they can increase the selection of spells in their spell book. In this way, the number of spells in the spell book may be brought in line with the number of spells the character can memorize. This is possible in two ways:

► **Mentoring:** The character may consult an arcane guild or mentor to learn new spells. This process takes about a week of game time. The spells a character learns in this way are determined by the referee, who may decide to let the player choose.

► **Research:** It is also possible to add spells to a spell book by means of ***Magical Research*** (see the full ***Old-School Essentials*** rules).

Lost Spell Books

An arcane spell caster can rewrite the spells in a lost or destroyed spell book:

► **Cost:** The cost per spell to be recovered is 1 week of game time and 1,000gp per level of the spell. For instance, rewriting two first level spells and one 2nd level spell will take 4 weeks and 4,000gp.

► **Sole activity:** This activity requires complete concentration. The character may not engage in any other activity for the required period.

Captured Spell Books

Each arcane spell caster's spell books are written so that only the owner is able to read the spells without the use of magic.

Cleric Spells

1st Level

1. Cure Light Wounds *(Cause Lt. Wounds)*
2. Detect Evil
3. Detect Magic
4. Light *(Darkness)*
5. Protection from Evil
6. Purify Food and Water
7. Remove Fear *(Cause Fear)*
8. Resist Cold

Higher level cleric spells (see the full ***Old-School Essentials*** rules)...

2nd Level

1. Bless *(Blight)*
2. Find Traps
3. Hold Person
4. Know Alignment
5. Resist Fire
6. Silence 15' Radius
7. Snake Charm
8. Speak with Animals

3rd Level

1. Continual Light *(Continual Darkness)*
2. Cure Disease *(Cause Disease)*
3. Growth of Animal
4. Locate Object
5. Remove Curse *(Curse)*
6. Striking

Reversible Spells

If a spell can be reversed (see ***Magic, p28***), the name of the reversed version is noted in parentheses.

Magic-User Spells

1st Level

1. Charm Person
2. Detect Magic
3. Floating Disc
4. Hold Portal
5. Light *(Darkness)*
6. Magic Missile
7. Protection from Evil
8. Read Languages
9. Read Magic
10. Shield
11. Sleep
12. Ventriloquism

Higher level magic-user spells (see the full ***Old-School Essentials*** rules)...

2nd Level

1. Continual Light *(Continual Darkness)*
2. Detect Evil
3. Detect Invisible
4. ESP
5. Invisibility
6. Knock
7. Levitate
8. Locate Object
9. Mirror Image
10. Phantasmal Force
11. Web
12. Wizard Lock

3rd Level

1. Clairvoyance
2. Dispel Magic
3. Fire Ball
4. Fly
5. Haste
6. Hold Person
7. Infravision
8. Invisibility 10' Radius
9. Lightning Bolt
10. Protection from Evil 10' Radius
11. Protection from Normal Missiles
12. Water Breathing

1st Level Cleric Spells

Cure Light Wounds

Duration: Instant
Range: The caster or a creature touched

This spell has two uses

1. **Healing a living subject:** Restores 1d6+1 hit points of damage. This cannot grant more hit points than the subject's normal maximum.
2. **Curing paralysis:** Paralysing effects are negated.

Reversed: Cause Light Wounds

Inflicts 1d6+1 hit points of damage to a touched creature. In combat, a melee attack roll is required.

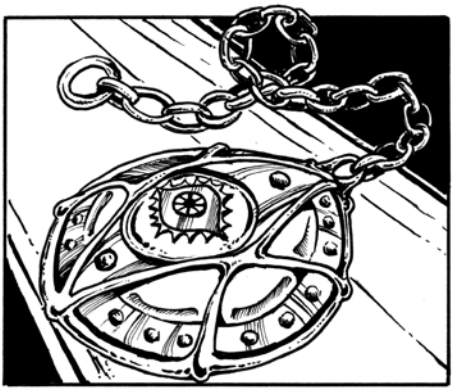
Detect Evil

Duration: 6 turns
Range: 120'

Objects enchanted for evil purposes or living beings with evil intentions are caused to magically glow.

► **Intent only:** This spell does not grant the ability to read minds, but only grants a general sense of evil intent.

► **Definition of evil:** The referee must decide what is "evil". Some things that are potentially harmful, like traps, are not "evil."



Detect Magic

Duration: 2 turns
Range: 60'

Enchanted objects, areas, or creatures are caused to glow. Both permanent and temporary enchantments are revealed.

Light

Duration: 12 turns
Range: 120'

This spell has three usages:

1. **Conjuring light:** In a 15' radius. The magical light is sufficient for reading, but is not as bright as daylight. The spell may be cast upon an object, in which case the light moves with the object.
2. **Blinding a creature:** By casting the spell upon its eyes. If the target fails a **saving throw versus spells**, it is blinded for the duration. A blind creature cannot attack.
3. **Cancelling darkness:** *Light* may cancel a *darkness* spell (see below).

Reversed: Darkness

Creates a 15' radius area of magical blackness, preventing normal sight (but not infravision). Like *light*, it may alternatively be used to blind creatures or to dispel a *light* spell.

Protection from Evil

Duration: 12 turns
Range: The caster

This spell wards the caster from attacks by creatures of another alignment, as follows:

► **Bonuses:** The caster gains a +1 bonus to saving throws against attacks or special abilities of affected creatures.

► **Affected creatures' attacks:** Against the caster are penalised by –1.

► **Enchanted, constructed, or summoned creatures:** The spell additionally prevents such creatures from attacking the caster in melee, though they may still make ranged attacks. If the caster engages such a creature in melee, this protection is broken (the caster still gains the save and attack bonuses mentioned above).

Purify Food and Water

Duration: Permanent
Range: 10'

This spell makes spoiled, rotten, poisonous, or otherwise contaminated food and water pure and suitable for eating and drinking. One of the following may be affected:

► **Drink:** 6 quarts.

► **Rations:** One trail ration (iron or standard).

► **Unpreserved food:** A quantity sufficient for 12 human-sized beings.

Remove Fear

Duration: 2 turns
Range: The caster or a creature touched

The creature touched is calmed and purged of fear. Magically induced fear may be dispelled, but this requires the subject to make a **saving throw versus spells**. The save is modified by +1 per level of the caster.

Reversed: Cause Fear

Will cause a target within 120' to flee for the duration unless it **saves versus spells**.

Resist Cold

Duration: 6 turns
Range: 30'

All creatures within range are protected from cold, as follows:

► **Normal cold:** Unharmed by non-magical freezing temperatures.

► **Save bonus:** Gain a +2 bonus to all saving throws versus cold-based magical or breath attacks.

► **Cold-based damage:** Is reduced by 1 point per damage die rolled. (Each die inflicts a minimum of 1 hit point damage.)

1st Level Magic-User Spells

Charm Person

Duration: One or more days (see below)
Range: 120'

A single human, demihuman, or human-like monster must **save versus spells** or be charmed, as follows:

- **Friendship:** The subject regards the caster as its trusted friend and ally and will come to the caster's defence.
- **Commands:** If they share a language, the caster may give the charmed creature commands, which it will obey.
- **Subject's nature:** Commands that contradict the charmed creature's habits or alignment may be ignored.
- **Suicidal commands:** An affected creature never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders.

Restrictions: Human-like monsters of greater than 4+1 HD and undead are not affected.

Duration: The charm lasts indefinitely, but the subject is allowed to make further **saves versus spells** at intervals, depending on its INT score. If one of these saves succeeds, the spell ends.

- **INT 3–8:** New save once every month.
- **INT 9–12:** New save each week.
- **INT 13–18:** New save once every day.

Detect Magic

Duration: 2 turns
Range: 60'

Enchanted objects, areas, or creatures are caused to glow. Both permanent and temporary enchantments are revealed.

Floating Disc

Duration: 6 turns
Range: 6'

The caster conjures a slightly concave, circular disc of magical force that follows them about and carries loads.

- **Dimensions:** The disc is 3 feet in diameter and 1 inch deep at its centre.
- **Load:** It can hold a maximum load of 5,000 coins (500 pounds).
- **Motion:** The disc floats at waist height and remains level, floating along horizontally within spell range.
- **End:** When the disc winks out at the end of the spell's duration, anything it was supporting is dropped.

Hold Portal

Duration: 2d6 turns
Range: 10'

This spell magically holds shut a door, gate, window, or other kind of portal.

- **Opening by magic:** A *knock* spell opens the held portal instantly.
- **Opening by force:** Creatures with at least 3 Hit Dice more than the caster can open the held portal with one round of effort.

Light

Duration: 6 turns +1 per level
Range: 120'

This spell has three usages:

1. **Conjuring light:** In a 15' radius. The magical light is sufficient for reading, but is not as bright as daylight. The spell may be cast upon an object, in which case the light moves with the object.
2. **Blinding a creature:** By casting the spell upon its eyes. If the target fails a **saving throw versus spells**, it is blinded for the duration. A blind creature cannot attack.
3. **Cancelling darkness:** *Light* may cancel a *darkness* spell (see below).

Reversed: Darkness

Creates a 15' radius area of magical blackness, preventing normal sight (but not infravision). Like *light*, it may alternatively be used to blind creatures or to dispel a *light* spell.

Magic Missile

Duration: 1 turn
Range: 150'

This spell conjures a glowing dart of energy that the caster may choose to shoot at a visible target within range.

► **Hit:** The missile hits unerringly (no attack roll or saving throw is required).

► **Damage:** The missile inflicts 1d6+1 damage.

► **Higher level casters:** May conjure more missiles: two additional missiles are conjured per five experience levels the caster has gained (i.e. three missiles at 6th–10th level, five missiles at 11th–15th level, etc.). Multiple missiles may be directed at a single target.

Protection from Evil

Duration: 6 turns
Range: The caster

This spell wards the caster from attacks by creatures of another alignment, as follows:

► **Bonuses:** The caster gains a +1 bonus to saving throws against attacks or special abilities of affected creatures.

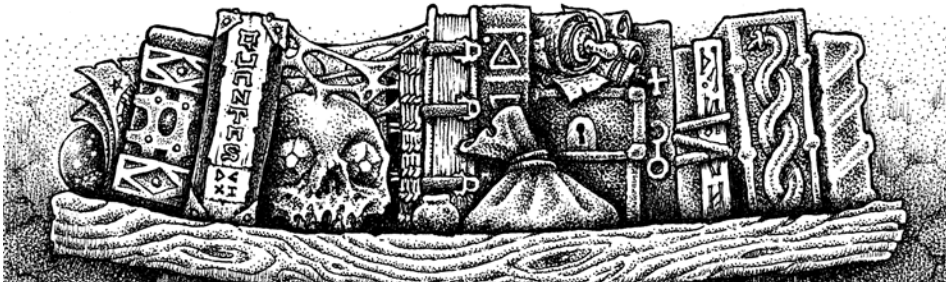
► **Affected creatures' attacks:** Against the caster are penalised by –1.

► **Enchanted, constructed, or summoned creatures:** The spell additionally prevents such creatures from attacking the caster in melee, though they may still make ranged attacks. If the caster engages such a creature in melee, this protection is broken (the caster still gains the save and attack bonuses mentioned above).

Read Languages

Duration: 2 turns
Range: The caster

For the duration of this spell, the caster may read any language, coded message, map, or other set of written instructions. This spell does not grant any ability to *speak* unknown languages.



Read Magic

Duration: 1 turn
Range: The caster

By means of *read magic*, the caster can decipher magical inscriptions or runes, as follows:

- **Scrolls:** The magical script of a scroll of arcane spells can be understood. The caster is then able to activate the scroll at any time in the future.
- **Spell books:** A spell book written by another arcane spell caster can be deciphered.
- **Inscriptions:** Runes or magical words inscribed on an object or surface can be understood.
- **Reading again:** Once the caster has read a magical inscription using *read magic*, they are thereafter able to read that particular writing without recourse to the use of this spell.

Shield

Duration: 2 turns
Range: The caster

Creates an invisible field of force that gives the caster an improved AC:

- **Against missile attacks:** AC 2 [17].
- **Against other attacks:** AC 4 [15].

Sleep

Duration: 4d4 turns
Range: 240'

A *sleep* spell causes a magical slumber to come upon creatures, excluding the undead. The spell may target either:

1. A single creature with 4+1 Hit Dice.
2. A total of 2d8 Hit Dice of creatures of 4 HD or lower each.

When targeting creatures of 4 HD or less, the following rules apply:

- **Weakest first:** Targets with the least HD are affected first.
- **HD:** Calculate monsters with less than 1 HD as having 1 HD and monsters with a bonus to HD as having the flat amount. (For example, a 3+2 HD monster would be calculated as having 3 HD.)
- **Excess:** Rolled Hit Dice that are not sufficient to affect a creature are wasted.

Killing: Creatures enchanted by this spell are helpless and can be killed instantly with a bladed weapon.

Awakening: Slapping or wounding awakens an affected creature.

Ventriloquism

Duration: 2 turns
Range: 60'

The caster may make their voice appear to come from any location or source (e.g. a statue or animal) within range.

Adventuring

Party Organisation

Size: The ideal size of a group is between 6 and 8 characters—large enough to confront the challenges of the adventure, while not so large as to be disorganised. If not enough PCs are present, the players may wish to hire retainers.

Classes: It is wise for a party to consist of a mix of characters of different adventuring classes. Combat-focused characters are essential for protecting the group from danger, while other classes each have magic or other special abilities which are useful for handling different situations that may arise in an adventure.

Level: As new PCs join play, the experience levels of the characters in the party may diverge. It is recommended that characters more than four levels apart should adventure separately, as challenges and rewards suitable to characters of greatly different experience levels do not match.

Marching Order

Before starting an adventure, the players should determine the normal arrangement of their PCs when exploring. This is known as the party's ***marching order***. For example, players may decide to move in a two-column formation, with well-armoured characters in front, weaker characters in the middle, and a rear guard. The group may define different standard marching orders for common situations (e.g. standard exploration, combat, opening doors, searching, etc.).

The Caller

If the players wish to, they may nominate one of their number as the spokesperson of the group, known as the caller. This player is responsible for informing the referee about the actions and movements of the party as a whole. Delegating this role to one player—rather than having each player informing the referee about their PC's individual actions—can speed up play.

The caller's character usually takes on the role of party leader and should thus have a high Charisma score and be located near to the front of the party.

The Mapper

One player should create a map of the areas being explored, based on the referee's descriptions. Details such as monsters or traps encountered, clues to puzzles, or possibly interesting unexplored areas may be noted on the map as it is drawn.

Dividing Treasure

The spoils of an adventure may be divided between surviving characters in whatever way the players agree on.

Non-magical treasure: Is typically divided evenly between player characters.

Magic items: The players must decide which character keeps each item. One method for doing this is for each player to roll a die and compare the results. The highest rolling player gets to pick a magic item first, the second highest rolling player gets the next pick, and so on.

XP Awards

All characters who return from an adventure alive receive experience points (XP). XP is gained from two sources: treasure recovered and monsters defeated.

Recovered Treasure

Treasure that PCs bring back from an adventure is the primary means by which they gain XP—usually accounting for ¾ or more of the total XP earned.

Non-magical treasure: Characters gain 1 XP per 1 gold piece (gp) value of the treasure.

Magical treasure: Does not grant XP.

Defeated Monsters

All monsters defeated by the party (i.e. slain, outsmarted, captured, scared away, etc.) grant XP based on how powerful they are. See the table to the right.

Base XP: The XP value of a monster is determined by its Hit Dice.

Bonus XP / ability: A monster's XP value is increased for each special ability it has. Special abilities are indicated by asterisks following the monster's HD rating.

Monsters with bonus hit points: Monsters whose HD are notated as a number of dice plus a fixed hit point bonus (e.g. HD 4+2) are more powerful and are listed separately in the table. For example, a monster with 2 HD is worth 20 XP, but a monster with 2+2 HD is worth 25 XP.

Higher HD monsters: For each HD above 21, add 250 XP to the Base and Bonus amounts.

Extraordinary peril bonus: A monster defeated under especially dangerous circumstances may be treated as one Hit Dice category higher on the table.

XP Awards for Defeated Monsters

Monster HD	Base XP	Bonus XP / Ability
Less than 1	5	1
1	10	3
1+	15	4
2	20	5
2+	25	10
3	35	15
3+	50	25
4	75	50
4+	125	75
5	175	125
5+	225	175
6	275	225
6+	350	300
7–7+	450	400
8–8+	650	550
9–10+	900	700
11–12+	1,100	800
13–16+	1,350	950
17–20+	2,000	1,150
21–21+	2,500	2,000

Division of Experience

The XP awards for treasures recovered and monsters defeated are totalled and divided evenly between all characters who survived the adventure—this includes retainers.

Awarded XP is always divided evenly, irrespective of how the players decide to divide the treasure.

Bonuses and Penalties

The referee may optionally grant XP bonuses to players who did particularly well. Likewise, players who did not do their share of the work may be penalized.

Time, Weight, and Movement

Tracking Time

When an adventure is under way, the referee should keep track of the time that elapses in the imagined world, known as ***game time***. This is distinct from ***real time***: what may take the players and referee mere seconds to describe may take PCs hours or even days to complete.

For example, when characters are exploring a dungeon, the referee tracks the number of turns that have elapsed; when characters are exploring the wilderness, the number of days elapsed is tracked.

The referee must adjudicate what may be accomplished in a given period of time.

Resources

As game time passes, the referee should pay attention to resources that the party consumes. For example: food, water, fuel for light sources, durations of spells or magical effects, etc.

Tracking Movement

As player characters explore the imagined world, the referee should keep track of their location on a prepared map. The map is usually kept secret from the players, who must rely on the referee's descriptions of the areas they explore.

To determine how long it takes for characters to move from one area to the next, the referee should refer to the characters' movement rates (see ***p9***).

Group Movement Rate

An adventuring party will usually want to stay together. The movement rate of the party as a whole is determined by the speed of the slowest member.

Measurements

Time: Rounds and Turns

Aside from everyday time increments (minutes, hours, days, and so on), the following special units are used in the game.

Turns: 10 minutes of game time. There are 6 turns in an hour. Time is measured in turns when exploring dungeons (see ***Dungeon Adventuring, p46***).

Rounds: 10 seconds of game time. There are 60 rounds in a turn. Time is measured in rounds during encounters, especially in combat (see ***Encounters, p48*** and ***Combat, p50***).

Distance: Inches, Feet, Yards, Miles

Staying true to its origins, this game uses imperial or customary US units. Distances are measured in inches (notated with a ”), feet (notated with a ’), yards, and miles.

Distance Conversions

- 1 foot = 12 inches
- 1 yard = 3 feet
- 1 mile = 1,760 yards = 5,280 feet

Weight: Coins

Weight measures typically come into play only when discussing how much characters can carry (see ***Encumbrance***, opposite). As coins are the most common form of treasure found by adventurers, all weights are measured in coins. (Ten coins are equivalent to one pound.)

Encumbrance (Optional Rule)

Some groups may wish to use a system to track the amount of gear and treasure a character can carry and how this affects their movement rate.

Tracking Encumbrance

Encumbrance is a measure of both the weight and bulk a character is carrying.

Treasure: The encumbrance of treasure carried by a character should be tracked. The encumbrance of common items of treasure is shown in the table below. The referee should decide the weight of other forms of treasure.

Equipment: Two options for tracking the encumbrance of characters' equipment are presented to the right. The same system should be applied to all characters.

Maximum load: The maximum load any character can carry is 1,600 coins of weight. Characters carrying more than this cannot move.

Treasure Encumbrance in Coins

Treasure	Weight in Coins
Coin (any type)	1
Gem	1
Jewellery (1 piece)	10
Potion	10
Rod	20
Scroll	1
Staff	40
Wand	10

Option 1: Basic Encumbrance

Treasure: The weight of treasure carried is tracked to make sure that the character's maximum load is not exceeded.

Equipment: The weight of armour, weapons, and adventuring gear is not tracked and does not count towards a character's maximum load.

Movement rate: Is determined by the type of armour the character is wearing and whether they are carrying a significant amount of treasure (as judged by the referee). The actual weight of the treasure carried does not affect movement rate.

Basic Encumbrance

	Movement Rate	
Armour Worn	Without Treasure	Carrying Treasure
Unarmoured	120' (40')	90' (30')
Light armour	90' (30')	60' (20')
Heavy armour	60' (20')	30' (10')

Option 2: Detailed Encumbrance

Treasure: The weight of coins and other treasure carried is tracked.

Equipment: The weight of the character's armour and weapons is also tracked (the weight of these items is listed in the equipment list). Miscellaneous adventuring gear (backpack, spikes, sacks, etc.) may be counted as 80 coins of weight.

Movement rate: The character's movement rate is based on the total weight of all significant items carried, including treasure, weapons, and armour.

Detailed Encumbrance

Encumbrance	Movement Rate
Up to 400 coins	120' (40')
Up to 600 coins	90' (30')
Up to 800 coins	60' (20')
Up to 1,600 coins	30' (10')

Ability Checks

The referee may use a character's ability scores to determine the character's chance of succeeding at various challenging tasks.

Rolling an Ability Check

The player rolls 1d20 and, if the result is less than or equal to the ability, the check succeeds. If the roll is greater than the ability, the check fails.

Modifiers

Bonuses or penalties to the roll may be applied, depending on the difficulty of the task. A modifier of –4 would be a relatively easy ability check, and a +4 would be very difficult.

1s and 20s

A natural 1 should be treated as a success and a natural 20 treated as a failure.

Damage, Healing, and Death

All characters and monsters have a hit point total, which represents their ability to avoid death. Many attack forms, including attacks with weapons in combat, subtract hit points from this pool.

Death

A character or monster reduced to 0 hit points or less is killed.

Destruction of Items

If a character is killed by a destructive spell or special attack (e.g. a *lightning bolt* spell or a dragon's breath), their equipment is assumed to be destroyed.

Destruction of Magic Items

Magic items in the possession of a character who is killed by a destructive spell or special attack may be allowed a chance to survive, as follows:

- **Save:** For each item, a saving throw may be made using the character's saving throw values.
- **Bonuses:** Items that grant a bonus in combat (e.g. magical weapons and armour) may also apply this bonus to the saving throw.

Healing

Natural: For each full day of complete rest, a character or monster recovers 1d3 hit points. If the rest is interrupted, the character or monster will not heal that day.

Magical: Healing may also occur through magic, such as potions or spells. This kind of healing is instantaneous. Magical healing and natural healing can be combined.

Saving Throws

All characters and monsters can make saving throws to avoid the full effects of certain magical or special attacks.

Categories

There are five saving throw categories, used in the following situations:

- **Death or Poison (D):** When targeted by a death ray or exposed to poison.
- **Wands (W):** When targeted by an effect from a magical wand.
- **Paralysis or Petrification (P):** When targeted by an effect that paralyses or turns to stone.
- **Breath Attacks (B):** When targeted by the breath of a dragon (or other monster with a breath attack).
- **Spells, Rods, or Staves (S):** When targeted by a baneful spell or an effect from a magical rod or staff.

When to Roll a Saving Throw

The appropriate saving throw to make and the effects of a success or failure are indicated in the description of the spell, monster attack, or adventure scenario.

Saving Throw Tables

Characters: Each character class has its own table denoting the saving throw values of characters of each experience level.

Rolling a Saving Throw

When affected by a spell or attack form which requires a saving throw, the player or referee must roll 1d20 and compare the result to the appropriate saving throw value:

- **Greater or equal:** A result that is greater than or equal to the saving throw value is a success.
- **Lower:** A result of less than the saving throw value is a failure.

Successful Saves

Damaging effects: A successful save against an effect that causes damage means that the damage is halved.

Other effects: A successful saving throw against an effect that does not cause damage means the effect has been entirely avoided or negated.

Saving Throws Versus Poison

Failure: A failed save against poison is usually fatal.

Damage: If a poisonous attack also inflicts damage, the damage is not affected by the success or failure of the saving throw.

Hazards and Challenges

Climbing

When characters are climbing in a difficult or tense situation, the referee may require an ability check against Dexterity.

Sheer Surfaces

Very steep or sheer surfaces are normally impossible to climb without specialised equipment. Some characters may have class abilities which allow them to attempt to climb such surfaces unaided.

Darkness

Characters will usually want to bring a source of light with them on underground expeditions. Typical light sources enable normal vision within a 30' radius.

Infravision

All non-human monsters and many demihuman races have a special kind of vision that allows them to see in the dark. This is called infravision.

Heat tones: Characters who have infravision can see the heat energy that radiates off of living things. Generally, living things will be visible as bright tones, while cool items are grey and very cold objects are black.

Reading: It is not possible to read in the dark with infravision, because fine detail cannot be perceived.

Range: Infravision works within a limited range (60' for monsters, unless specified otherwise in a monster's description).

Disruption: Infravision only functions in darkness. Visible light (normal or magical) and large heat sources will disrupt it.

Light and Surprise

Characters or monsters that carry a light in a dark environment are usually unable to surprise opponents (see ***Encounters, p48***), because the light gives their presence away.

Falling

Falling from a height onto a hard surface inflicts 1d6 damage per 10' fallen.

Losing Direction

Characters can confidently follow trails, roads, and other well-known landmarks without fear of becoming lost. Likewise, travelling with a reliable guide prevents becoming lost. However, when travelling through untracked, open regions, it is easy to lose direction.

The chance of the party becoming lost depends on the type of terrain being explored.

Effects of Being Lost

If the party becomes lost, the referee will decide which direction they are actually travelling in. One option is to pick a direction only slightly off course. For example, if the group intended to go south, they are actually headed southwest or west.

It may take some time for a lost party to realise that it is moving in the wrong direction.

Starvation

If characters go for a full day or more without food or water, the referee may begin to apply penalties to attack rolls and movement rate, require more frequent rests, or even begin to deduct hit points (in extreme cases).

Swimming

Movement rate: Characters move at half their normal movement rate when swimming.

Who can swim: It is assumed that every character knows how to swim, unless there is some obvious reason why a character could not have learned.

Drowning

The circumstances in which drowning is a risk—as well as the chance of drowning—are judged by the referee.

Example circumstances: Swimming in treacherous water conditions, swimming while wearing armour or carrying heavy or awkward items, fighting in water.

Example chances of drowning: A character swimming in rough waters while wearing heavy armour and carrying a heavy load may have a 99% probability of drowning. A character in the same waters but wearing light armour and carrying a light load may only have a 10% probability of drowning.

Wandering Monsters

Besides the monsters specifically placed in certain regions of a dungeon or wilderness, PCs may randomly encounter monsters on the move between areas. These are known as wandering monsters.

See ***Dungeon Adventuring, p46*** for specific details.

Frequency: The referee should roll periodically to determine whether a wandering monster is encountered. The frequency of checks depends on the type of area being explored.

Chance: When a wandering monster check is made, the chance of a random encounter is usually 1-in-6. This chance may vary, depending on the type of area being explored (e.g. dungeon region or level, type of wilderness terrain).

Monster type: Each area should have its own table of wandering monsters, which the referee rolls on when an encounter takes place.

Noise or light: If the party is making a lot of noise or carrying bright light sources in a dark environment, the referee may increase the chance of wandering monsters being encountered.

Hiding: If the party rests quietly in an out-of-the-way location, the referee may decrease the chance of wandering monsters being encountered.

Dungeon Adventuring

Sequence of Play Per Turn

1. **Wandering monsters:** The referee makes checks as applicable.
2. **Actions:** The party decides what action to take (e.g. moving, searching, listening, entering rooms).
3. **Description:** The referee describes what happens. If monsters are encountered, follow the procedure described in ***Encounters, p48***.
4. **End of turn:** The referee updates time records, with special attention to light sources, spell durations, and the party's need to rest.

Doors

Dungeons often have many doors, some secret and others obvious. Many are locked and many are stuck.

Searching for Secret Doors

Some doors are hidden or concealed. Adventurers may choose to search a 10' × 10' area for secret doors. See ***Searching***.

Chance of finding: If a character is searching in the right location, there is a 1-in-6 chance of finding a secret door. (Some types of adventurers may have an increased chance.)

Stuck Doors

Forcing: The chance of forcing open a stuck door depends on the character's Strength (see ***Ability Scores, p12***).

Surprise: A failed attempt to force open a door eliminates any possibility of surprise (see ***Encounters, p48***) that the party may have against any monsters on the other side of the door.

Locked Doors

Locks may be picked by a character proficient with lock picks or opened by magic.

Doors Swinging Shut

Doors opened by adventurers (by whatever means) are likely to swing shut after they pass. To prevent this, doors may be held open using iron spikes or other wedges.

Monsters and Doors

Monsters that live in the dungeon can usually open doors (even stuck doors), unless they are blocked, magically closed, or wedged shut with spikes.

Listening at Doors

Chance of success: PCs have a 1-in-6 chance of detecting subtle sounds beyond a door. (Some types of adventurers may have an increased chance of success.)

Referee rolls: The referee should always roll for the character listening so that the player never knows if the roll failed or if there simply is no sound behind the door.

One chance: This attempt may only be made one time at any door by a character.

Silent monsters: Some monsters, such as undead, do not make any noise.

Movement

Exploring the unknown: When exploring unknown areas of a dungeon, characters can move their ***base movement rate in feet per turn***. This (very slow!) rate of movement takes account for the fact that PCs are exploring, watching their footing, mapping, and trying to be quiet and avoid obstacles.

In familiar areas: When PCs are moving through dungeon areas with which they are familiar, the referee may allow them to move at a faster rate. For example, the referee might allow PCs to move at three times their base movement rate per turn, when moving through familiar areas.

Resting

Frequency of rest: Characters must rest for one turn every hour in the dungeon.

Penalty for not resting: If characters press on without resting, they suffer a penalty of –1 to attack and damage rolls until they have rested for one turn.

Traps

There are two kinds of traps:

- **Treasure traps:** Small traps placed on an item, to prevent it being tampered with or stolen (e.g. a poison needle on a chest or lock).
- **Room traps:** Large traps that are designed to affect anyone who enters a certain area (e.g. a pit that opens in the floor when walked over).

Triggering Traps

Each trap is triggered by a specific action (e.g. opening a door or walking over a particular area).

Chance of triggering: Every time a character makes an action that could trigger a trap, there is a 2-in-6 chance of the trap being sprung.

Trap damage: Damage inflicted by a triggered trap is usually automatic, without an attack roll.

Monsters: Monsters may be able to bypass traps without risk, if the referee wishes.

Searching

The following stipulations apply to searching for secret doors, room traps, and treasure traps.

Time: Searching takes one turn.

Referee rolls: The referee should always roll for the character searching, so that the player does not know if the roll failed or if there are simply no hidden features present.

One chance: Each character can only make one attempt to search a specific area or item.

Searching for Room Traps

Adventurers may choose to search a 10' × 10' area for room traps. See ***Searching***.

Chance of finding: If a character is searching in the right location, there is a 1-in-6 chance of finding a room trap. (Some types of adventurers may have an increased chance.)

Searching for Treasure Traps

Characters with the ability to find treasure traps (as noted in their class description) may choose to search items (e.g. chests, locks) for traps. See ***Searching***.

Chance of finding: The chance of finding treasure traps, if a character is searching in the right location, is noted in the character's class description.

Wandering Monsters

Frequency: A check is typically rolled once every two turns in the dungeon.

Chance: The typical chance of encountering a wandering monster is 1-in-6.

Distance: Wandering monsters are encountered 2d6 × 10 feet away, moving in the direction of the party.

Encounters

An encounter begins when the characters stumble onto a monster, either because the referee has planned an encounter in the area the PCs are exploring or because a random die roll indicates an encounter (see ***Wandering Monsters, p45***).

Encounter Sequence

1. **Surprise:** The referee rolls for surprise, if applicable.
2. **Encounter distance:** The referee determines how far away the monsters are from the PCs.
3. **Initiative:** Any sides that are not surprised roll initiative to determine who acts first.
4. **Actions:** Any sides that are not surprised decide how they will respond to the encounter. The encounter is played out accordingly.
5. **Conclusion:** One turn has passed.

Surprise

When to Check

A check for surprise is made for any side that is not expecting the encounter. For example, if a monster is waiting quietly for an approaching party that is making a lot of noise, the monster would not have a chance to be surprised, but the party would.

Light and Surprise

Characters or monsters that carry a light in a dark environment are usually unable to surprise opponents, because the light gives their presence away.

Surprise Checks

Each side that is not already aware of the other's presence rolls 1d6.

Monsters: The referee rolls for monsters.

PCs: One player rolls for the adventuring party as a whole.

Results: A result of 1 or 2 means the side is surprised.

Effects of Surprise

Both sides surprised: There is simply a momentary confusion—neither side has any advantage.

One side surprised: The side that is not surprised gains a one round advantage. The surprised side cannot act that round.

Encounter Distance

The situation in which the encounter occurs often determines how far away the monster is. If there is uncertainty, the encounter distance may be determined randomly:

- **Dungeon:** 2d6 × 10 feet.
- **Wilderness:** 4d6 × 10 yards (or 1d4 × 10 yards if either side is surprised).
- **Waterborne:** 4d6 × 10 yards (or 1d4 × 10 yards if either side is surprised).

Initiative

(See ***Combat, p50*** for full details.)

Roll 1d6: For each side, at the start of each round.

Winner: The side with the highest roll acts first. Other sides act in order from highest to lowest roll.

Ties: Either both sides may roll again, or actions on both sides may be resolved simultaneously.

Actions

Player Character Actions

The players decide how they will act.

Monster Actions

The referee determines monsters' reaction to the party. Sometimes, circumstances make it obvious how a monster will react. Otherwise, the referee may roll on the table below to determine how a monster reacts to the party.

Charisma: If one specific character attempts to speak with the monsters, that character's NPC reactions modifier due to CHA (see ***Ability Scores, p12***) is used to modify the monster reaction roll.

Monster Reaction Roll

2d6	Result
2 or less	Hostile, attacks
3–5	Unfriendly, may attack
6–8	Neutral, uncertain
9–11	Indifferent, uninterested
12 or more	Friendly, helpful

Common Actions

Any action is possible in an encounter, but the following are common:

► **Combat:** If one side attacks, casts spells, or makes tactical movement, begin tracking time in rounds, following the combat procedure (***p50***).

► **Evasion:** If one side decides to flee, the other may decide to pursue. See ***Evasion***.

► **Parley:** PCs may attempt to communicate with monsters. Opening an encounter in this way can influence the monsters' behaviour (see ***Monster Actions***). If both sides decide to talk, the negotiation may be role-played.

Movement

Encounter movement rate: During encounters, a character can move up to one third of their base movement rate per round in feet (in the dungeon) or yards (in the wilderness). For example, a character whose base movement rate is 120' could move 40' per round during a dungeon encounter.

Maximum duration: Characters may move at this rate for at most 60 rounds (one turn).

Evasion

If one side wishes to avoid an encounter, it may attempt to flee. This is called ***evasion*** and is only possible ***before combat has begun***. When a side decides to attempt an evasion, the opposing side must decide whether or not to pursue.

Players: May decide freely whether they wish to pursue fleeing monsters.

Monsters: The referee must decide whether monsters pursue fleeing PCs. (A low roll on the Monster Reactions table may be taken to indicate that the monster will pursue.)

No pursuit: If the opposing side decides to let the other side flee, then the evasion automatically succeeds; the encounter is avoided.

Pursuit: If the opposing side gives chase, the chance of the evasion succeeding depends on the environment being explored.

Conclusion

An encounter is assumed to take at least one full turn to complete, including time to rest, regroup, clean weapons, bind wounds, and so on, afterwards.

Combat

Combat Sequence Per Round

1. **Declare spells and melee movement**
2. **Initiative:** Each side rolls 1d6.
3. **Winning side acts:**
   a. **Monster morale**
   b. **Movement**
   c. **Missile attacks**
   d. **Spell casting**
   e. **Melee attacks**
4. **Other sides act:** In initiative order.

Declare Spells and Melee Movement

Players must inform the referee if they intend to ***cast a spell*** or ***move when in melee***. Other actions need not be declared.

Initiative

Roll 1d6: For each side at the start of each round.

Winner: The side with the highest roll acts first. Other sides act in order from highest to lowest roll.

Ties: Either both sides may roll again or actions on both sides may be resolved simultaneously. (This means that both sides may inflict deadly blows on each other!)

Slow Weapons

Combatants attacking with two-handed melee weapons (and some missile weapons—as indicated in the equipment description) always act last in the round, as if they had lost initiative.

Individual Initiative (Optional Rule)

Instead of an initiative roll per side, a roll may be made for each individual involved in a battle, modified by DEX (see ***Ability Scores, p12***). The referee may determine an initiative modifier for monsters that are very fast or slow, instead of applying a DEX modifier.

Monster Morale (Optional Rule)

See the full ***Old-School Essentials*** rules.

Movement

Outside of Melee

Movement rate: Combatants can move up to their encounter movement rate each round.

Maximum duration: Combatants may move at this rate for at most 60 rounds.

In Melee

When in melee with a foe, only the following forms of movement are possible:

- **Fighting withdrawal:** The combatant moves backwards at up to half their encounter movement rate. There must be a clear path for this movement.
- **Retreat:** The combatant turns and flees from melee, moving up to their full encounter movement rate. This round: the retreating combatant may not attack; the opponent gains a +2 bonus to all attacks against the retreating combatant and ignores any AC bonus due to the retreating combatant's shield (if applicable).

Missile Attacks

Are possible when opponents are more than 5' from one another. See ***Attacking***.

Range Modifiers

All missile weapons have ranges, noted in the equipment lists.

Short range: +1 bonus to attack rolls.

Medium range: No bonuses or penalties.

Long range: –1 penalty to attack rolls.

Beyond long range: Attack not possible.

Targets Behind Cover

Complete cover: The target cannot be hit.

Partial cover: The referee may apply attack penalties of between –1 and –4 (e.g. a small table might incur a –1 penalty; dense woods might incur a –4 penalty).

Spell Casting

Freedom: The spell caster must be able to speak and move their hands. A spell caster cannot cast spells if gagged, bound, or in an area of magical silence.

Sole action: When casting a spell, no other actions may be taken in the round.

No movement: The spell caster cannot move and cast a spell in the same round.

Line of sight: Unless noted in a spell's description, the intended target (a specific monster, character, or area of effect) must be visible to the caster.

Disrupting Spells

If a spell caster loses initiative and is successfully attacked or fails a saving throw before their turn, the spell being cast is disrupted and fails. It is removed from the caster's memory as if it had been cast.

Melee Attacks

Are possible when opponents are 5' or less from each other. See ***Attacking***.

Other Sides Act

Repeat steps 3a to 3e for each side, in order of initiative (highest first).

Attacking

1s and 20s

Natural 20 attack rolls always hit. Natural 1 attack rolls always miss.

Invulnerabilities

Some monsters are immune to certain attacks. In this case, even if an attack hits, damage is not rolled.

Attacks Per Round

PCs normally attack once per round. Some monsters have multiple attacks.

Attacking and Moving

Movement and attacking may be combined in the same round.

Attack Rolls

1. **Roll 1d20**
2. **Apply modifiers:** STR for melee; DEX, range, cover for missile attacks.
3. **Determine hit AC:** Look up the result in the attack matrix row for the attacker's THAC0 (see ***Character Attack Matrix, p52***). This indicates the AC score that the attack hits.
4. **Result:** If the hit AC is equal to or lower than the opponent's AC, the attack hits. Referee rolls for damage.

Ascending Armour Class (Optional Rule)

Groups using the optional rule for Ascending AC (see ***p9***) should use the following attack procedure instead.

1. **Roll 1d20**
2. **Apply modifiers:** STR for melee; DEX, range, cover for missile attacks.
3. **Determine hit AC:** Add the attacker's attack bonus. The result is the ascending AC score the attack hits.
4. **Result:** If the hit AAC is equal to or higher than the opponent's AAC, the attack hits. Referee rolls for damage.

Rolling for Damage

PC attacks: Inflict 1d6 damage. Damage of melee attacks is modified by STR.

Monster attacks: Deal the damage indicated in the monster's description.

Minimum damage: An attack which hits always deals at least one point of damage, even when damage modifiers reduce the number rolled to 0 or less.

Death: A character or monster reduced to 0 hit points or less is killed.

Variable Weapon Damage (Optional Rule)

Some groups may prefer different weapons to inflict different amounts of damage. In this case, PC attacks inflict the damage indicated for the weapon in the equipment lists.

Attack Matrix

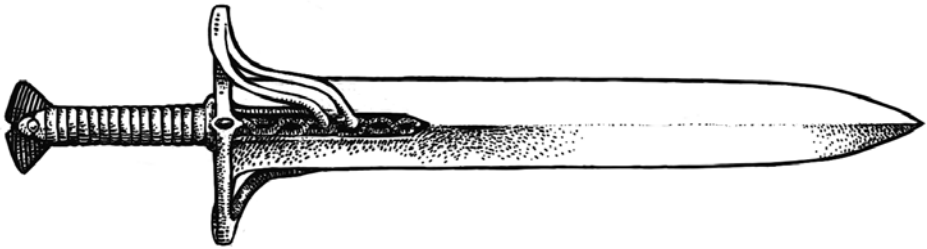
The table below shows the attack probabilities for characters of all classes.

► **High-level play:** The attack matrix extends to 36th level, for the benefit of groups using the optional rules for high-level play that are presented in the complete game.

Other Classes

If character classes from other books are in use, the THAC0 score listed in their level advancement table determines which row in the character attack matrix to use. Locate the character's THAC0 score in the AC 0 column of the attack matrix—the character uses this row of the matrix for their attack rolls.

For example, a character with THAC0 12 [+7] uses the attack matrix row for fighters of 10th–12th level (where the number 12 appears in the AC 0 column).



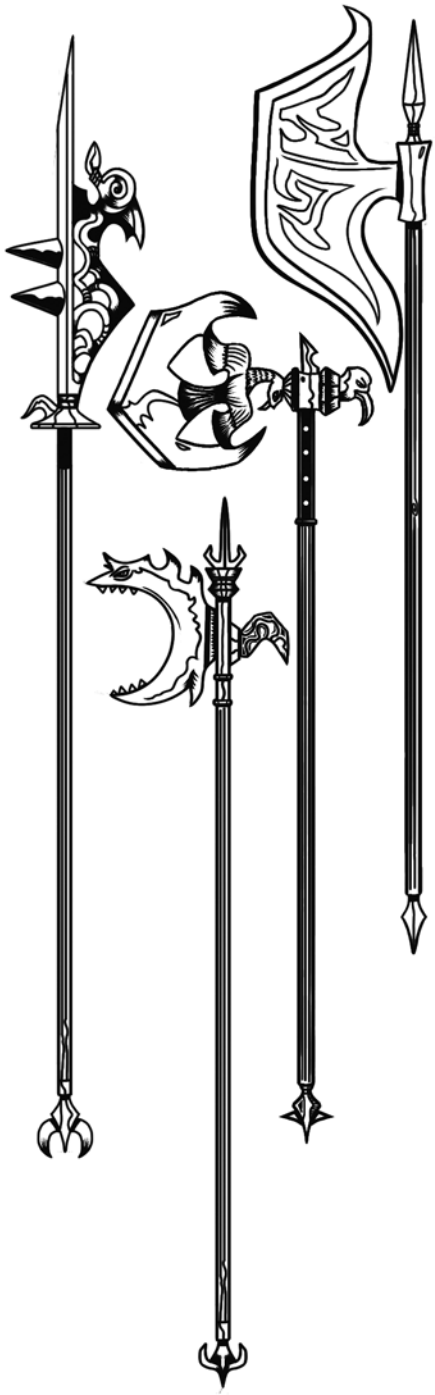
Character Attack Matrix

Class and Level			Attack Roll to Hit AC												
Fighter	Cleric Thief	Magic-User	–3	–2	–1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1–3	1–4	1–5	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10
4–6	5–8	6–10	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8
7–9	9–12	11–15	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
10–12	13–16	16–20	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
13–15	17–20	21–25	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2
16–18	21–24	26–30	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2
19–21	25–28	31–35	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
22–24	29–32	36	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
25–27	33–36	–	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
28–30	–	–	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
31–33	–	–	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
34–36	–	–	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Example of Making an Attack Roll

A 5th level fighter attacks a monster with AC 4. The attack is resolved as follows:

1. The player rolls 1d20. The roll comes up 14.
2. The fighter has a STR score of 13, meaning they gain a +1 bonus to melee attack rolls. The result of the attack roll is thus 15.
3. The player looks up the result (15) in the attack matrix row for 5th level fighters. This indicates the Armour Class that the attack hits: AC 2.
4. As AC 2 is better than the monster's Armour Class, the attack hits!
5. Damage is rolled and the result subtracted from the monster's current hit point total.



Attack Rolls Using THAC0 (Optional Rule)

Instead of referring to the attack matrix, attacks may be resolved using THAC0 directly. A THAC0 score denotes the attack roll required to hit AC 0. The attack roll required to hit opponents of other AC scores can be calculated by subtracting the target AC from the THAC0. For example, a character with a THAC0 of 19 could hit an opponent with AC 5 on a roll of 14 or greater (19 – 5 = 14).

Note: Using THAC0 to resolve attack rolls results in very slightly different attack probabilities than when using the traditional approach of referring to the attack matrix.

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