

D&D 5e Close Quarters Chases – DM Cheat Sheet

Length of the Chase: *roll 3d6, 4d4... total number is how many rounds the chase can last. Chase ends earlier if Pursuer catches up to Quarry before then. Chase then transitions into combat or social encounter.*

Chase Initiative:

- *NPCs and the players all go as groups... there is no rolling for initiative.*
- *Environment acts. Quarry always goes first, Pursuer always goes afterwards.*
- *Players have 1 minute to make ALL their actions.*

Movement in a Chase:

- *In a chase, NPCs are (nearly) always 5ft faster than player characters.*
- *Exceptions to this:*
 - *If a player character has a movement speed less than 30ft per round, then they move only 25ft per chase.*
 - *If a player character has a movement speed faster than 30ft per round, then they move 35ft per chase.*
- *Players roll CON saves after 3 + CON modifier rounds. If they fail, they suffer by 5ft.*

Environmental Complications:

- *Roll to see which player character/creature is affected by the environment.*
- *Roll on a chase complication table.*
- *Play out that complication before anything else.*
- *Environment Complication Random Tables:*
 - *Rooftop chase complications (Waterdeep Dragon Heist, pg 72).*
 - *Urban and wilderness chase complications (DMG, pg 254).*
 - [*Ideas for coming up with obstacles on the fly.*](#)
 - [*Exotic environment complication tables.*](#)

Player Actions in a Chase:

- *Players only get one action per round. They can choose from the following:*
 - **Physical action:** *Using the body. Athletics checks, acrobatics checks, martial attacks, or the Help action.*

- **Arcane action:** Spellcasting (see special rules). Players can only cast each spell once per encounter.
- **Survey action:** Assessing the environment. Perception checks, investigation checks, or insight checks (predicting enemy creatures' next move).
- **Environmental action:** Player uses action overcoming environmental complication.
- **Tactical action:** Player formulates a plan to get advantage on their roll next round. Intelligence or wisdom saving throw. Advantage on this roll if they reduce their speed by 10.
- **Social action:** Anything that involves talking or communicating. Persuasion check, intimidation check, or the Help action.
- **"Dash" special action:** For one round, a player character can turn on an extra burst of speed and gain an extra 10ft of movement. They can only do this once during the entire chase.

Special Rules for Actions in Chases

Sleight of Hand Checks for Attacks and Spellcasting: Anything involving using an object with their hands first requires a successful sleight of hand check. If they fail, they take no action for that turn.

Spellcasting That Impacts MOVEMENT: The following movement spells are slightly augmented to maintain a chase while still providing a massive advantage for player characters:

- **Longstrider:** Players move an additional 5 ft per round.
- **Jump:** Players automatically succeed in any physical action that requires leaping.
- **Feather Fall:** Players can slow a descent to the point where they are NOT injured by a fall, but still maintain their speed.
- **Freedom of Movement:** Players are unaffected by any spell or environmental effect that creates difficult terrain.
- **Expeditious Retreat:** Players can choose to take the Dash Special Action two additional times.
- **Haste:** Players move an additional 5ft per round, and can choose to take the Dash Special Action two additional times.

AOE Spells That Create Difficult Terrain: 1) If the player manages to get the spell off, the enemy creatures automatically fail the saving throw, and 2) it reduces their speed by ½ for only one round.

All Other Spellcasting: Unless specified otherwise, spells that are successfully cast reduce the movement of an affected creature by 5ft for that round. No damage is done.

What About Invisibility?: If a Quarry chooses to turn invisible, the Pursuers must make a DC13 Perception check to continue to follow (the idea is that the chase is so hectic that they are causing all sorts of environmental evidence of their path). A Quarry cannot attempt to hide until the chase has exhausted a number of rounds. However, once the rounds have been exhausted, they can choose to go invisible and AUTOMATICALLY succeed in avoiding being caught.

Disadvantaged Ranged Attacks: Players must first pass a sleight of hand check AND make their attack at disadvantage when using a ranged martial attack.

Stopping Movement to Attack: However, it should pay off. If a player does not move for their round, they not only roll their attacks/checks normally, but they also reduce the enemy's speed by 10ft (rather than 5ft) if it is an attack.