

# Basic Dungeoneering for New Game Masters



Are you a new Game Master (GM)? This will help you get setup and playing quickly and give you the basics of how to run our **GEEKY TENDENCIES** branded campaigns.

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## TIPS & TRICKS

### SETTING THE SCENE

The storyline, descriptions, atmosphere and aesthetic are as important to role playing games as the technical rules and actions. You'll want to do your best to make the game fun and interesting to play. After all, you're going on an adventure!!! If it's your first time being a Game master (GM), all anyone can ask is that you do your best. As long as everyone is having a good time, that's what matters!

### GOING OFF-BOOK

You're amongst other humans, and they aren't always predictable. They will go off-book, or act in a way you didn't expect. Nothing is impossible in a world created by imagination. Roll with it.

## GAME SETUP

1

### APPOINT A GAME MASTER (GM)

The Game Master (GM) guides and narrates the adventure and controls the creatures that players will encounter. No experience is needed, anyone can be a GM. Give it a try! The **GM** should have a set of rules to play by, information on the monsters or creatures that may be encountered, some loot players can find, any spells needed, and either a map that's to scale or some paper to sketch one on, something to jot down notes in, and finally...an adventure to play!

2

### PLAY AREA SETUP

While the **GM** is setting up and determining their first steps, all other players should be getting themselves ready and helping set up the play area. Ensure you leave plenty of space in the middle of the playing area for a map, and keep beverages well away from any paper products. Each player will need some space for their character sheets, space for rolling dice, etc.

3

### CHARACTER SELECTION

Each player will need a character. You can use pre-generated characters or create your own. Experienced players may also use character they've created using a different rpg game or character generator. Just make sure the character level is appropriate to the adventure.

**TIP:** Always try to ensure you have a rogue in the group, they are stealthy, great at picking locks, disarming traps, and all kinds of other neat things. **TIP:** Clerics tend to keep you alive.

4

### GET READY!

You are about to head out on an adventure! There are a few things you will need before you go. The players will want to introduce their characters to the GM and to each other. Players new to or not comfortable with role play or improv can simply read the information from their character sheet aloud to the other players. Those more comfortable with role playing may wish to introduce themselves in character as their character. If you have miniatures, avatars or tokens to represent players on the map, get those ready as well.

**NOTE:** The back of this guide also contains a few quick definitions as well as descriptions of the different definitions and icons we use in some of our games to help you get started quickly.

# BASIC DUNGEONEERING

## WHAT IS A TURN?

There are two types of turns in Basic Dungeoneering.

1. Exploring Turns
2. Combat Turns

The players need to know where they are. Describe the environment to the players. They will then begin the game with exploring turns.

There are many actions players can take:

- » Search for secret doors or traps
- » Listen at doors and hallways
- » Check doors to see if they are open, stuck, or locked and take actions on the door
- » Search for treasure
- » Talk to characters, creatures, and look for clues
- » Take a rest (to heal from combat)
- » Anything else you can think of!

We will review combat turns later but first, exploring!

## EXPLORING - WHO GOES FIRST?

The question of who goes first in a role playing game (rpg) is called *initiative*.

In an exploring turn players can decide amongst themselves who might go first and do not need to roll any dice to determine initiative.

In a **combat turn**, players and creatures will roll for *initiative* to determine play order. **TIP:** When initiative is rolled write the order down to help you remember who goes when.

## 1<sup>ST</sup> TURN EXPLORE!

The GM tells the players to place the token, mini or avatar that represents their player on the map (if available). The GM will set the scene, explain what the mission is, and ask the players, "What do you want to do first?"

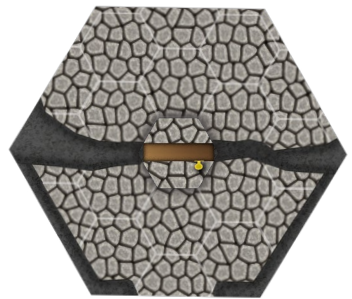


**On an exploring turn, players don't have to act in any specific order**, and can generally move as many spaces as they like.

The exploring 'turn' lasts until something occurs requiring players to switch to a combat turn.

## EXPLORING EXAMPLE

Players may see a door blocking their path. They may ask the GM, "is the door locked?"



## EXPLORING ACTIONS

If players choose to act on the door in some way, the GM will ask them to roll a die (usually a twenty-sided die called a D20) to determine their success at things like:

- Perception (if they are clever or perceptive enough to detect a trap)
- Strength (if they are strong enough to kick down the door)
- Sleight of Hand ability (if they are skilled enough to pick the lock)



**TIP:** It is possible to try something more than once and be successful on another attempt.

**Scenario:** A player asked if the door is locked, was told that it was, and then decided to kick down the door.

## 2<sup>ND</sup> TURN COMBAT!

Let's say they are strong enough to kick down the door and move into the next chamber. Oh no! They have encountered some nefarious creatures!



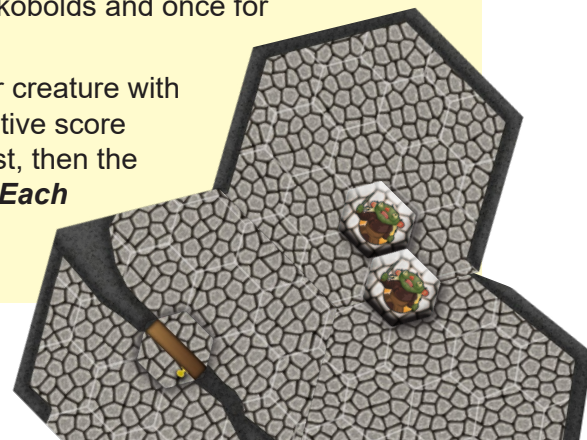
## COMBAT - WHO GOES FIRST?

Each player and creature will roll a *D12* for *initiative* and add the +/- initiative modifiers as listed on their character sheet. **WRITE DOWN EACH PLAYER'S NUMBER!**



The GM then rolls initiative for each TYPE of creature (i.e. if there are multiple kobolds and one spider in an encounter, the GM would roll once for the group of kobolds and once for the spider).

The character or creature with the highest initiative score number goes first, then the next and so on. **Each player will get a turn in combat.**



Once everyone has had a turn, continue taking turns until victory, defeat or retreat.

**SURPRISE!** If players surprised the enemy, the players go first in a 'surprise round' regardless of initiative rolled.

After the surprise round (where those doing the surprising start combat first), regular combat begins using the initiatives rolled.

**It's a tie!** The GM wins all ties in any initiative roll for player vs creature. If players tie with each other, they can either re-roll to decide a tie, or decide among themselves.

**TIP:** The GM may should write down the initiative order as everyone may get so caught up in the combat action that they don't remember who's turn it is supposed to be.

## COMBAT TURNS

Each **combat turn** consists of a **MOVE**, an **ACTION**, plus a **BONUS ACTION** and / or a **REACTION**. See your complete RPG rules for more details on actions and combat turns.

### MOVING

1. You don't have to MOVE.
2. You can MOVE before or after you take an ACTION.
3. You can MOVE, take an ACTION, and MOVE again but you can't MOVE farther than your SPEED indicates (Example, 🏃+25 ft means you can't move more than 25 feet in one turn).
4. Your MOVE can include: jumping, climbing, swinging, etc. as per the character's abilities.
5. You can move *through* another creature's space, (either allied or hostile) as follows:
  - a) You can move through a *hostile* creature's space, only if that creature is at least 2 sizes smaller or larger than you.
  - b) If you leave a hostile creature's reach during your move, you provoke an opportunity attack.
  - c) You cannot stop in another creature's space.

### ACTIONS

1. You don't have to take an ACTION.
2. You can attempt any ACTION that could be accomplished in 6 seconds or less.
3. The most common ACTION in combat is the Attack ACTION (🔪) (See *Combat Actions in your RPG rule book for different types of attacks such as ranged, melee, spells, and different types of actions such as hiding, helping, dodging, using an object (such as a potion), and more*).

## BONUS ACTIONS

You get one bonus action per turn. This is usually a special ability, feature, or spell (i.e. Casting Hunter's Mark).

## REACTION

A special ability, feature or spell may also allow you to react to a triggering event.

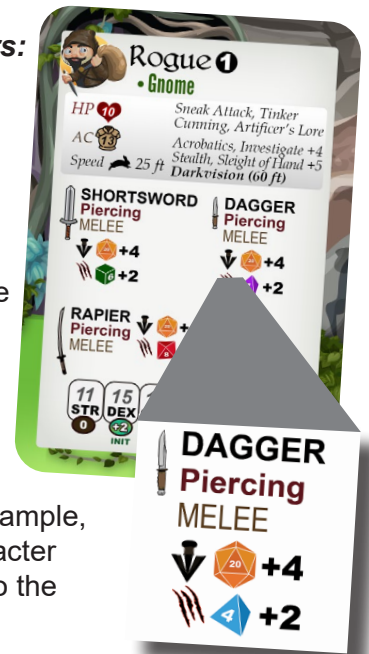
1. You are allowed one REACTION per round or TURN.
2. Your REACTION does not have to occur during your TURN. If it occurs during another's, then their turn is suspended until your reaction is resolved. For example, an enemy attacks the party's wizard triggering the wizard's shield spell.
3. An Opportunity Attack is another type of REACTION. (See your RPG rule book for more info).

## COMBAT EXAMPLE

In an example, our Gnome Rogue is taking the first attack action by throwing a dagger. It is important to note that attacking and dealing damage are two separate rolls.

1. **Choose the target:** This may be a creature, object or location within the range of the chosen weapon or spell.
2. **Determine any modifiers:** Spells, special abilities and features can apply penalties or bonuses known as *advantage* or *disadvantage* to your attack roll. The GM will need to tell a player if one or the other applies to their attack roll.

3. **Roll attack dice** as shown on your character sheet to see if an attack (🔪) is successful. For example, 🔪🎲+4 means the character rolls a **D20**, and adds 4 to the number rolled.
4. **Succeed or Fail:** If the total number meets or exceeds the target's *armour class* (AC 🛡️14), the attack hits! **The player may then roll for damage** (🔪).
5. **Roll damage dice** to see how much damage a successful attack deals to the target. For example, 🔪🎲+3 would mean that the player rolls a **D8**, and adds 3 to the number rolled. The creature's hit points (**HP** ❤️11) are reduced by that number. When damage reduces the creature's hit points (**HP** ❤️11) to 0, it is defeated.





OR perhaps the player's attack roll isn't enough and they miss their target. If they still have enough movement left, they can then choose to **MOVE** to where the thrown dagger landed, then take a **BONUS ACTION** to pick their knife back up so they can be ready to defend themselves. If they don't think of that on their own, the GM can prompt them with something like, "you missed and your knife is now across the room, are you going to use your movement to try and pick up your knife?"

### **OUCH! I'VE BEEN HIT!**

More often than not, an attack will hit and the player or creature will take damage. Depending on the opponent's damage roll, they will need to adjust their current HP to reduce it by the damage amount.

If another player heals someone or they drink a healing potion on their next turn, they can change their HP again to restore their health.

When attacked, a player or creature may also be able to defend themselves. Perhaps they are naturally resistant to fire, or they have a shield spell.

### **SOME CONDITIONS MAY APPLY**

**Conditions** can affect a player at any given time changing the way they can move or act. A player might be knocked unconscious or be blinded by a bright light. These may be the result of a spell, a class feature, a monster's attack, or other effect. Most conditions, are impairments. Details on conditions can be found in your RPG rule book.

### **NOTES ON DYING**

Massive damage can kill something or someone instantly. If they fall to 0 hit points, and the remaining damage equals or is greater than their hit point maximum, they die.

If damage reduces them to 0 hit points, and they don't die, they fall into an unconscious **condition** (see your RPG rule book).

If they start a turn at 0 hit points, they must make a **death save** throw. Get 3 successes before 3 failures to ensure survival.

When a player or creature dies, their avatar, token, or mini is removed from the map.

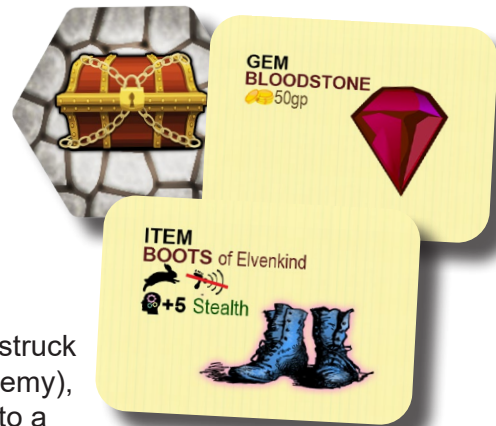
### **WE ALL ATTACKED, WHAT NEXT?**

When everyone has had a combat turn, a new round of combat starts. Each round is based on the same initiative order you followed in the first round (not in the surprise round if there was one).

### **END OF COMBAT**

Combat can end in three ways:

1. When the entire group of players is killed and/or retreats.
2. When the entire group of creatures is killed and/or retreats.
3. A bargain/deal is struck (i.e. bribing an enemy), reducing combat to a less deadly encounter. Often players may also take this opportunity to attempt to gain information from an enemy.

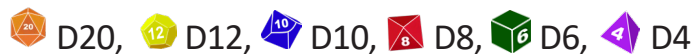


## **AFTER COMBAT EXPLORE!**

Once combat is over don't forget to search the area for useful items or treasure! Finding loot and treasure is essential to your mission.

Players will continue to explore until they either succeed in their mission, retreat, are all killed, or they become trapped and need to find and possibly even fight their way out of a sticky situation!

**DICE TIP:** Our games offer colour coded dice icons to help players learn about and identify the different types of dice.



Multiple dice are used for different purposes. The GM will indicate which dice to use and when.

## **TAKING A REST**

The first combat can be grueling and the party may need to recharge their batteries. Players can use an exploring turn to take a rest.

A character can roll their Hit-point Dice (HD) at the end of a short rest, which is about an hour in "game-time" (they do not have to roll all their HD). Roll HD, and add the CON modifier to it. They will regain HP equal to the total. HD rolled are considered "used" for that day. When they have 'used' all of their HD, they might have to take a Long Rest to fully recover, use a healing potion, or hope that another player can use a spell to heal them the rest of the way.



# REFERENCE TABLE



	<p>Each creature or player has six ability statistics: <b>Strength (STR)</b>, measuring physical power, <b>Dexterity (DEX)</b>, measuring agility, <b>Constitution (CON)</b>, measuring endurance, <b>Intelligence (INT)</b>, measuring reasoning and memory, <b>Wisdom (WIS)</b>, measuring perception and insight, and <b>Charisma (CHA)</b>, measuring force of personality.</p> <p>These stats are associated with a number in a square and a <i>modifier</i> in the circle below. The DEX modifier is also your initiative modifier.</p>
	<p><b>Armour Class (AC)</b></p> <p>Armor protects its wearer from attacks. Armour Class (AC) is a number that shows how difficult it is to do damage to you. Wearing more or better armor or using a shield can increase your AC.</p>
	<p><b>Hit Points (HP)</b></p> <p>Hit points (HP) are the amount of damage a character can take before it is defeated. As you take damage the HP number is reduced.</p>
	<p><b>Level Indicator</b></p> <p>This indicates the level of a character, monster, creature, or spell (if used).</p>
	<p><b>Passive Perception</b></p> <p>Perception is a skill based on Wisdom. <i>Passive</i> perception represents your natural ability to spot, hear, or otherwise detect the presence of something. It measures your general awareness of your surroundings and the keenness of your senses.</p>
	<p><b>Hit-point Dice (HD)</b></p> <p>Hit-point Dice determine your starting Hit Points (HP) and your HP when leveling up. It is also used to heal after a rest.</p>
	<p><b>Initiative Modifier</b></p> <p>The Initiative Modifier is added to the number rolled to determine a player or creature's place in the combat order (to see who goes first). Highest number goes first whether it is a player or creature, unless it is a surprise round.</p>
	<p><b>Movement</b></p> <p>Every character and creature has a speed of movement, which is the distance in feet that they can walk in 1 round. Running, jumping, climbing, etc. may require additional ability checks. A standard movement space on a map (roughly a 1" square or hex) is five feet. Five spaces is 25 feet.</p>
	<p><b>Languages</b></p> <p>Level 1 characters usually know at least two languages. Use these to communicate with creatures and other players.</p>
	<p><b>Proficiency/Abilities</b></p> <p>Each character or a creature can be proficient in (really good at) certain skills. A proficiency bonus is used on Ability Checks, Saving Throws, and Attack Rolls. For example, a Dexterity check might reflect a character's attempt to pull off an acrobatic stunt, or to stay hidden. Some characters have specific abilities given to them by way of their class or species, etc.</p>
	<p><b>Attack</b></p> <p>An attack roll determines if you hit a target, but not the damage you do. To attack, roll the dice shown next to the attack icon and add the modifier number. For example,   <b>+5</b> tells you to attack by rolling a D20 die and then add five to the number rolled, and if the number is bigger than the enemy AC, you hit them.</p>
	<p><b>Damage Dealt</b></p> <p>This icon indicates the damage you will do to your target when you hit them with your attack, weapon or spell. You do not roll for damage unless you first succeed with your attack roll. To do damage, roll the dice shown next to the damage icon and add the modifier number. For example,   <b>+3</b> tells you to roll a D8 die and then add three to the number rolled, this number is deducted from the HP of the creature you hit.</p>
	<p><b>Poison</b></p> <p>This icon shows the damage you will do to your target with poison if you hit a creature with a poisoned dart or dagger. To do poison damage, roll the dice shown next to the poison icon. For example,   <b>POISON</b> tells you to roll a D4 die. This poison damage is deducted from the creature's HP on each turn for the duration of combat, or until the creature is healed.</p>