

Item-Based Problem Solving

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
1	A spool of very fine wire copper wire. Useful for setting trip-wires, rigging up pulleys, and conducting electricity.	10 gp	Jeweler or mechanic.
2	Bag of small, extremely bouncy rubber balls.	10 gp	Entertainer or parent.
3	Antique but functional fishing rod, complete with box of tackle and line, suitable for hooking all kinds of different things.	10 gp	Antiquarian (or someone who really needs a fishing rod).
4	A vial of white powder which, if swallowed, acts as a powerful emetic. As well as its obvious medicinal uses, it could be used to incapacitate someone with violent vomiting, or to force some horrible monster to vomit up the person it just swallowed whole.	10 gp	Doctor
5	A large box of shiny silver pins. Can be used to pin things together, or scattered over the floor as improvised caltrops.	10 gp	Tailor
6	Several jars of thick, high-quality actor's face paint. Useful for disguise, camouflage, pretending to be an orc, etc.	10 gp	Actor
7	Large, highly polished metal mirror. Handy for reflecting light and lasers, setting up tricks with smoke and mirrors, etc.	10 gp	Just about anyone.
8	A box of perfumed candles with different scents and sizes. Can be lit in different combinations to create various combinations of light and scent; can also just be squashed down into wax if you need to take an impression of something.	10 gp	Any large settlement.

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9	Broad-brimmed fisherman's hat. Waterproof and wide enough to conceal most of the wearer's face. Could be used as an improvised boat for carrying small objects across water.	10 gp	Anyone who spends a lot of time in the rain.
10	Finely-made snorkel.	10 gp	Swimming enthusiast.
11	Several bars of high-quality scented soap. Extremely slippery when wet.	10 gp	Any member of the middle or upper classes.
12	Large, ornate drum. Generates incredible amounts of noise when beaten.	10 gp	Musician
13	Bag of strong chili powder. Stir it into food for a murderously hot meal, or blow it into people's eyes and noses as an irritant.	10 gp	Chef
14	Vial of strong acid. Handy for etching, ruining locks, pouring on people you hate, etc.	10 gp	Alchemist
15	Several tubes of white powder, which cause itching and intense irritation on contact with skin. Pour one into someone's clothes and they'll be itching around for days.	10 gp	Practical joker.
16	A very long pair of pincers, ornately moulded so their nippers resemble the jaws of a dragon. Useful for pulling nails out of things, and for picking up objects you'd rather not touch.	10 gp	Smith
17	Academic gown, hood, and bands. Handy if you want to look clever, or infiltrate a university.	10 gp	Academic tailor.
18	A box of high-quality costume jewellery: obviously fake on close inspection, but from a distance it'll look as though you're wearing a king's ransom. Handy if you're baiting a trap, or if you want to pretend to be richer than you are.	10 gp	Actors

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19	An engrossing and well-written mystery novel: it's not very deep or clever, but pick it up and you'll soon be wondering where the last six hours went. Handy if you need someone to be distracted without realising it.	10 gp	Book collectors and people with boring jobs.
20	Intricately made wind-up clockwork toy. Can be used to carry small objects, depress pressure plates, set off traps, etc.	10 gp	Mechanic or wealthy parent.
21	Bag of glitter. If poured out, gets everywhere and is irritatingly difficult to get rid of. Anything that has been glitter-bombed will be highly visible by torchlight in the dark, making it a potential anti-stealth or anti-invisibility countermeasure.	10 gp	Entertainers
22	Box of bladders, which can be inflated like balloons and used as floats. Add a candle to turn them into crude hot air balloons.	10 gp	Jester
23	Bottle of coloured ink, rare and hard to get hold of. Handy for making marks and staining things.	10 gp	Scribe
24	A blood-curdling sermon about all the awful things the gods are going to do the world, and how richly we deserve them. Handy for putting the fear of God into people.	10 gp	Zealots and misanthropes.
25	A long, strong, extremely stretchy elastic cord. Useful for bungee jumping and launching things out of improvised catapults.	10 gp	Engineers or daredevils.
26	Sturdy and well-made spiked mountaineering shoes. Excellent for walking over icy and/or uneven surfaces.	10 gp	Mountaineers
27	Weighted medicine ball. Aside from its uses in weight training, can be rolled like a bowling ball to knock things down.	10 gp	Fitness enthusiasts.
28	A box of soft moulding clay: just add water and reshape as desired.	10 gp	Sculptor
29	A bag of flash powder. When lit, it emits a blinding flash of light.	10 gp	Entertainers

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
30	A large, well-crafted, heavy-duty drill. Given time, it can be used to drill holes through stone.	10 gp	Mason or a miner.
31	A thick, heavy blanket covered in beautiful embroidered decoration. Can be used to bundle people up in, muffle objects to prevent them making a sound, pack fragile items, etc.; you can also just wrap it around you as protection against the cold.	10 gp	Anyone who cares about staying warm in style.
32	Large bronze fire-fighting syringe, capable of sucking up a couple of liters of liquid and then projecting it in a high arc over a distance of several yards.	10 gp	Anyone who lives in a fire-prone city (which is most of them).
33	A bottle of potent weed killer. Handy for clearing overgrowth, and extremely toxic to plant creatures (and, if swallowed, to non-plant creatures as well).	10 gp	Farmer or gardener.
34	A large jar of talcum powder. As well as its obvious uses to absorb moisture and reduce friction, it can be used in larger quantities to soak up dangerous liquids, or scattered around to mark invisible creatures.	10 gp	Any maker of cosmetics.
35	A pair of finely-made ice skates.	10 gp	Anyone who lives in a cold climate.
36	A stack of cheaply-printed pamphlets full of wild conspiracy theories, each supported by just enough evidence to sound plausible if you're not too well-informed and don't think about them too hard.	10 gp	Agitator
37	A hand-cranked propeller. Can be used as a fan to direct or disperse gases, or to propel something through water.	10 gp	Engineer
38	A joke book, full of genuinely hilarious (if rather mean-spirited) jokes. Give it to someone and they'll be laughing for hours.	10 gp	Jesters and entertainers.
39	A long wooden box and two silvered glass mirrors, fitted together to form a crude periscope.	10 gp	Anyone

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
40	A box of high-quality fireworks. When lit, they hurtle straight forward and explode, creating stupendous amounts of noise, sparks, and coloured smoke.	20 gp	Entertainers
41	A tiny steam engine. Add fuel and water and it spins around uselessly, but tie it onto something else and you could use it to power mechanism, drive a tiny steam car, or similar.	20 gp	Engineer
42	A large net with an amazingly fine mesh, attached to rope for throwing and hauling, and ringed with wickedly-sharp riphooks.	20 gp	Fishermen
43	A foot-high black silk top hat. Useful if you need to make yourself look taller and/or classier.	20 gp	Gentleman
44	A well-stocked box of herbs and spices. Can be used to add some flavour to the blandest meal - or to disguise the taste of whatever you've just added to someone's food.	20 gp	Chef
45	Unnervingly lifelike doll. Likely to be mistaken for a real child at first glance.	20 gp	Collector
46	Waist-length wig made from human hair. Useful for quick disguises and smuggling - you can hide a lot of objects under that much hair. In a pinch it could be used, Rapunzel-style, as a substitute rope.	20 gp	People who wish they had more hair than they do.
47	Stack of stamped certificates for academic qualifications, all filled out with the same almost-illegible name. Handy for people who want to pretend they have knowledge or status they don't really possess.	20 gp	Spies, charlatans, or college drop-outs.
48	Wind-up clockwork music box. When cranked, plays the same tune over and over again until it winds down.	20 gp.	Anyone
49	A deck of marked cards and a pair of loaded dice, both skillfully made.	20 gp	Gambler

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
50	A sheet of strong, stretchy tarpaulin. Can be used as a tent, or as a waterproof covering for valuable objects; can also be stretched between two people and used as an improvised trampoline.	20 gp	Sailor or traveller.
51	Several tubes of brightly-coloured oil paint.	20 gp	Artist
52	A box containing hundreds of tiny silver bells. Can be tied to strings, tripwires, etc. for use as an alarm system.	20 gp	Dancer or musician.
53	Vial of glowing liquid: briefly emits light equivalent to an candle when shaken vigorously, but otherwise just emits a dull green glow. Can be painted over things to make them glow with an unearthly greenish light.	20 gp	Alchemist
54	Vial of strong, fast-drying glue. Capable of bonding stone, glass, wood, or metal.	20 gp	Craftsman or alchemist.
55	Bottle of stimulants. A spoonful will keep you awake: drinking the whole bottle will keep you jerking and jittering around wildly for the next 48 hours.	20 gp	Watchmen or university students.
56	Large bag of marbles, made from semi-precious stones to entertain some long-dead aristocratic child. Handy if you want to make something roll, or make someone trip over.	20 gp	Rich people with small kids.
57	Expensive and strong-smelling perfumes. Handy for leaving scent trails, or masking your own smell.	20 gp	Anyone vain and/or high-status.
58	A powerful magnet on the end of a stick.	20 gp	Alchemist or engineer.
59	A box of tooth-achingly sugary confectionery	20 gp	Anyone with a sufficiently sweet tooth.
60	Fashionable chopines (platform shoes) with eight-inch wooden platforms. Handy if the floor is six inches deep in something you really don't want to walk in	20 gp	Any dedicated follower of fashion.

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
61	A crude gas mask, made from a filter attached to a leather hood. Allows moderately safe movement through smoke, gas, etc.	20 gp	Alchemist
62	A box of strong, tightly-coiled metal springs	20 gp	Engineer
63	A bag of grey powder which turns into fast-drying cement when mixed with water. There's enough here to make a couple of cubic feet	20 gp	Builders in a hurry.
64	A primitive hang-glider made from cloth and bamboo. Capable of carrying one human-sized passenger, provided they're not carrying anything too heavy	30 gp	Adrenaline junkies.
65	A fiery political tract, full of stirring revolutionary rhetoric, cataloguing the crimes of the ruling classes and calling upon the people to rise up. Handy if you want to rile up a mob in a hurry	30 gp	Agitator
66	Several large marionettes on strings. If skillfully operated, they could almost pass for real children when seen from a distance	30 gp	Entertainer
67	A bottle of alchemical lubricant. Makes things extremely slippery. Suitable for internal, external, and industrial use	30 gp	Engineers or sexually adventurous individuals.
68	Bag of smoke bombs: if thrown against a hard surface, they explode into a huge cloud of choking smoke on impact	30 gp	Thieves, entertainers, and wannabe ninja.
69	Suit of high-quality fur clothes, lined with fleece. Capable of keeping the wearer warm even in extremely cold conditions	30 gp	Anyone who lives or works in cold environments.
70	Ceramic mask painted with enamel to resemble a ferocious demonic face. Disturbingly realistic, especially if only glimpsed briefly	30 gp	Actor or collector.

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
71	Bottle of strong, high-quality vodka. Can be used for cleaning, starting fires, or making people very drunk	30 gp	Any connoisseur or alcoholic.
72	Military medals from a recent campaign. Handy for making good impressions and convincing people of your valour and prowess	30 gp	Mercenary (they're good for business!) or collector.
73	A sturdy magnifying glass. Handy for examining things close-up and concentrating light	30 gp	Sage or a craftsman.
74	Ten yards of sturdy chains, connected together with three high-quality padlocks, their keys still inside them. Useful for connecting and/or restraining things	30 gp	Smith, jailer, or bondage enthusiast.
75	Chess set with beautifully carved pieces. You'd be surprised how many dungeon occupants fancy themselves as chess masters	30 gp	Any chess enthusiast.
76	Sturdy pair of spectacles set with tinted glass, allowing even very bright lights to be looked at safely	30 gp	Anyone with sensitive eyes.
77	A book of rather moving and hepfully non-specific love poetry. Memorise some of it for next time you need to persuade someone just how much you adore them!	30 gp	Lovers or book collectors.
78	Huge Gone With the Wind-style hooped ballgown. Has skirts wide enough to hide virtually anything under, up to and including another person	30 gp	Belle
79	A vial of sluggish fluid which acts as a powerful painkiller when swallowed. Can be used as an anaesthetic, or as a crude but effective knock-out drug	30 gp	Doctor
80	Engraved silver trumpet. Creates a loud, clear, piercing note when blown, audible from a great distance	40 gp	Herald or musician.
81	An ornately engraved pipe and a pouch of fine tobacco, which has a very distinctive smell when smoked	40 gp	Smoker

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
82	A meticulously-catalogued collection of tiny feathers, taken from many different species of bird. You could blow them in someone's face to cause sneezing or tickling, or just to impede visibility	40 gp	Collector
83	A bottle of alchemical sleeping pills. Taking one will make you drowsy; taking a whole handful will knock you out for hours	40 gp	Doctor or insomniac.
84	A signet ring, bearing the crest of a well-known noble family from a couple of provinces away. Very useful for forging documents	40 gp	Forger
85	A primitive diving suit: leather suit, fish-bowl helmet, leather air hose and pump. Incredibly cumbersome to use	40 gp	Diver
86	A box of thin magnesium strips. Individual strips can be used as flares, or the whole box can be burned as an incendiary	40 gp	Alchemist
87	A leather bullwhip, marked with a monogram which implies it once belonged to a famous archaeologist. Not great as a weapon, but in the hands of an agile wielder it can be used to grab objects, swing from branches, pull levers, etc.	50 gp	Collector
88	A jewelled ring, with a hidden panel concealed beneath the jewel, on which is painted the personal coat of arms of the reigning monarch. Handy if you want to pretend to be some kind of secret agent	50 gp	Jeweller
89	A box of valuable incense. If burned, emits quantities of thick, richly-fragrant smoke	50 gp	Priest
90	A small hand-cranked electrical generator. Capable of giving people minor electric shocks (no damage) if cranked vigorously. Requires a conductor such as wire or water to convey the electricity over a distance	50 gp	Wizard or engineer.
91	A sturdy spyglass. Makes far-off things look closer	50 gp	Sailor

d100	Item	Value	Interested Parties
92	A beautiful white wedding dress. Handy for faking tragic apparitions	50 gp	Anyone who enjoys dreaming about their wedding day.
93	Finely-embroidered clerical vestments. Useful if you want to pretend to be a high-ranking man or woman of the cloth	50 gp	Cleric
94	A waxwork model of a half-dismembered corpse. Looks horribly realistic when seen from a distance. Good for scaring people off	50 gp	Medical student or someone with extremely morbid taste in art.
95	An umbrella made from alchemically-treated leather, which is not only waterproof but also highly resistant against fire, acid, etc.	50 gp	Alchemist or adventurer.
96	Several bottles of strong, fast-drying dye in a variety of bright colours. Can be used to stain objects, clothes, and even skin in different hues	50 gp	Dyer
97	A protective suit made from alchemically-treated leather: it won't stop a fireball, but it is highly resistant to heat, acid, or fire. It's very stiff, though, so moving around in it is rather clumsy	50 gp	Alchemist or adventurer.
98	A lovely porcelain tea set. Brings a touch of class to any social occasion	50 gp	Aristocrat or social climber.
99	A flask of alchemical coolant. Drop it into a bowl of liquid to freeze it into ice, or put it into a crate to create a crude refrigerator	50 gp	Chef, noble, or alchemist.
100	Fop's clothes: powdered wig, extravagant cravat, scented gloves, ultra-tight trousers, the works. Great if you want people to simultaneously regard you as highly important and yet not worth taking seriously, which can be a very useful combination	100 gp	Actual Fop.

PDF: [2LateForThePelle](#)

CREDITS

Joseph Manola (2018, Feb 4). When all you have is a hammer: item-based problem-solving in OSR D&D. Posted at <https://udan-adan.blogspot.com/2018/02/when-all-you-have-is-hammer-item-based.html>