ADDITIONAL THINGS

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v1.0

THANK YOU

It's a fair assumption that if you are reading this, you backed the Kickstarter/ Bought a PDF from RPG.now. So thanks. Thanks a bunch. That may sound sarcastic, but it's not, I really am grateful. Here's a little something extra to show you how much I appreciate all the support you have given TBH! Oh and if you didn't support the Kickstarter/ bought a PDF I guess you must have pirated it somehow. Frankly I'm just flattered you care enough.

RULES ALTERNATIVES

Additional Things is a collection of optional rules, notes, suggestions and other ideas that, for one reason or another were not included in TBH's mini rulebook. Mostly because of space, possibly because they're dumb - I'll let you decide which. Choose which you want, if any, to include in your game. Some of these have appeared on my blog or social media - but its nice things all neat like, eh?

ENCUMBRANCE

The existing rules are designed to be a quick way of modelling weight, plus the difficulty of carrying lots things. If you are looking for more depth/complication use the following modification.

Every item can have multiple keywords from the following list, for each one the item weighs '1' more :

- Fragile – Items that are prone to breaking, or to damage.
- Long – Objects longer than 5ft in any dimension.
- Cumbersome – Things that are shaped in ungainly or awkward ways,
- Heavy – Objects that despite their size require greater effort to move.
- Difficult - Objects that are hard to store or handle, for example hot or dangerous things.

You'll notice that this modification is going to weigh down characters a lot, not everyone enjoys the logistics of gear management. If you do use this consider adding items to your game that ignore these rules, making the item more desirable. For example Plate & Mail would always be Cumbersome and Heavy in my game - so I would make a Expert Crafted set that isn't Cumbersome, then a Master Crafted set that's neither - making it super desirable.

MAGIC VARIANT

A very simple 'narrative' twist can be made that dramatically changes the way spells are obtained and treated.

Each spell is a unique item. Much like a 'named' magical item or relic, only one instance of the spell exists. It can be stolen, they can be forgotten and discovered again, they can be researched and located - but there can never be more that one copy of that spell (in a book) in the game-world. A spell can be memorised from someone else's book - and cast. The caster testing their INT as per normal, to see if they lose the ability to cast one spell of that level.

These changes have a massive impact on how magic users will advance in power - talk it through with your players before you mess up their fun.

PANIC AND LIGHT

Whilst exploring subterranean places light is incredibly important, if a character ends their turn in a place with absolute pitch darkness they must immediately make a WIS test. If they succeed they may continue to act as normal but if they fail, they Panic!

At the start of their turn they must roll on the Panic! table, and at the end of their turn they may make a WIS test to overcome act normally. This continues until the make a successful WIS test.

	PANIC!
1	Gritted Teeth - Make a free WIS test in order to end the Panic.
2	Rooted - Cannot move this turn.
3	Shock - Cannot perform any actions that would involve the use of your hands.
4	Fumble - The *player* must perform everything this turn with their eyes closed.
5	Life before the eyes - CON is reduced by 2.
6	Heart Attack - Taken Out of Action

I think the Panic! rules are a worthy inclusion in any dungeon delving scenario - but might not be for everyone's taste, so were cut for space in the main rulebook. Also if you don't like the 'party game' vibe of the Fumble result, consider changing that to something more boring.

WEAKER WARRIORS

Originally Warriors were a little weaker, but received a 'buff' in power - based on feedback given early on in the Kickstarter. To bring them back to where they were, rule that every additional target they attack must be a new target with equal or lower HD than the last.

This reduces the number of opportunities to use their special ability and forces the damage to be spread out. A target can be attacked twice, but an additional target must be attacked between the attacks - this entirely stops the high level Warriors 'damage dumping' on single targets.

BLOCKING

Once per turn, when an NPC makes a move to somewhereNearby, and at the end of the move they would end up being Close to an ally - a character may move and block the path of the NPC. The character must have *not* used its movement this turn. This action stops the NPC engaging their ally, although the character is likely to be receive the attack of the NPC they blocked.

I enjoy using miniatures occasionally (when I can get a face to face group.. Woe is me!) So sometimes it feels nice to allow some tactical actions during combats - to take advantage of that 'War-gaming aspect' which can be fun in light doses.

MONEY

TBH's default is set to a low-money, generic 'coins' approach - allowing GM's to stamp their personality on the campaign. But here's a fun twist - when players pick up money they don't get a set number, rather they get dice (d6).

They can count the coins by rolling the dice, which takes an action (Max 4 rolls) and add to the total amount to the coins they are carrying.

For every HD a creature has, it is carrying a d6 of coins. So a level 4 Ruffian would be carrying 4d6

This a fun distraction but got cut from the main rules for space - I use it all the time. Some players would like to count all their money as they find it; when that's a handful of coins, say 3d6 worth - that's fine. But any more than that, make them aware that it will cost them an action on their turn - to do it accurately.

Also if you really want to be flash and have the time/money, get a as many d6 as you can muster, spray paint them gold - then hand those out as treasure - players love it.

LUCK

Each character is created with one point of Luck - they can trade this in at any time and get a re-roll on any one die, or create one fact of story fiction that does not invoke direct mechanical benefits. The only way to get more is to be awarded them by the GM - I give them out to my players when they mess up really badly. Karma.

You already know whether you like Luck systems or not, and this one's nothing crazy or innovative.

FAILING FORWARD

If a player fails a roll and a GM suggests it, they may treat the outcome of that action as a success - but they must accept a cost or penalty from the list below, chosen and adapted to fit the narrative by the GM.

COST OF SUCCESS
Roll a d10, this item in the PCs inventory is destroyed/lost.

COST OF SUCCESS
Someone Nearby (including the PC) takes 1d6 HP damage.
Disadvantage on a future test of the GM's choice.
+2 to the next Reaction roll the GM makes.
Rolls of 1-2 when counting coins are obvious counterfeits.
+1 to the next Out of Action roll the PC makes.

Some people scorn failing forward, I find myself using it when I'm looking to engage a story focused player or when i'm feeling generous and the situation is dire - so some mechanical hooks are useful things to have worked up in advance.

PARALYSED

Some monsters in the main rulebook will cause PC's to become Paralysed. Whilst Paralysed a character cannot move, talk or take any actions. At the start of their turn a character can make a CON test, If successful they are no-longer Paralysed and can continue the rest of their turn.

I cut this from the rules for space reasons, it seemed like a GM would be able to come up with something with the implied 'status effect', plus a Clerics advantage on CON tests. You can use the same approach to model lots of impairing effects, Poison, Fire, Insanity, Blindness etc - just vary up the associated attributes.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

An alternative method of checking for random encounters is to roll a d4 every time the players make a loud noise or stay in a potentially dangerous area longer than 5 Minutes (turns). Results of 1 indicate a random encounter.

Not everyone likes or can remember to roll a dice every 15 minutes, this offers a much less regimented approach - giving back the GM some control.

MORALE

If the number of opponents engaged in combat with the players drops by 50% they are 'broken' and a Reaction roll should be made to determine their new attitude.

If a character can make a successfulCHA test the broken opponents will attempt to flee the combat as quickly as possible. If they have a leader fighting amongst them, the CHA test is taken with Disadvantage.

This is a very 'wargamey' feeling rule, which will add an interesting tactical element to combats, if you're so inclined. And remember if the new reaction roll is favourable, yet the NPC's were trying to kill the players a moment before - its no hard stretch to imagine that they are now grovelling for their

lives! All of this should be used as a guide, its recommended a GM should exercise their 'narrative common sense'.

HUNGER & RATIONS

At the start of a session every character rolls their ration's Usage die. If they are unable to eat/drink for any reason - they roll all tests with Disadvantage until they do.

As soon as they have eaten rations, a character regains 1 HD Hit Points, they can eat more should the story dictate - but only gain the healing benefit once per games session.

This is most certainly an abstract approach to hunger - consider this if you always get carried away or like to hand-wave the 'dull aspects' of being alive.

WEAKER FOES

Foes that don't have names are just red-shirts really, and a good red shirt should die in one hit. As long as they take 1 point of damage they go down. Still give them HD as you'll want to know how much damage they dole out per hit.

Also if a player is lucky enough to roll a 1 on an attack, the *named* creature is killed outright - preferably in a visceral and overly gory manner.

This makes the characters feel a little more powerful. I'd probably even use much lower level monsters too, because if i'm using these it's because I want the lawnmower scene from Braindead.

'BETTER' ARMOR

If you feel like the current Armor system is too weak - here's the first of two alternatives.

Armor Points (AP) reduce damage in the same way, however they don't run out - so each hit is reduced by the Armor points amount. Every piece of Armor now has a Usage Die (UD)- *see the table opposite*.

TYPE	UD	AP
Gambeson	d4	1
Leather	d6	2
Chain Mail	d8	3
Plate & Mail	d10	4
Small Shield	d4	1
Large Shield	d4	2

Immediately after a fight where armor has been used to reduce damage, its Usage Die must be rolled. If the roll is a 1 or 2 the Usage Die reduces as per normal, and the Armor then has the AP of the armor

above it in the table. So for example failing a UD roll for Chain would reduce it to having 2 AP (Leather).

If the UD is a d4 and fails, it's considered destroyed and should be removed from a players inventory. Armor can be repaired however - roll its current Usage Die and multiply the amount by 10, this is the cost to upgrade the Usage Die to the next die up in the chain.

REACH WEAPONS

When a creature moves so they are Close to a PC who has a long weapon, the defence roll against the creatures first attack is at Advantage.

MORE ARMOR

If you like the existing Armor system, but just want to give it a bit of a boost carefully consider two small changes you can make that dramatically increase the Armors power.

Double Armor points on everything and remove the need to rest an hour - have Armor points refresh at the end of a fight. Simple.

The default armor rules cater for a gritty and harsh feeling where armor is literally the difference between life and death, the kind of encounters where a handful of HP can mean walking away or rolling on the Out of Action table - In keeping with the unforgiving, player choice nature of OSR style play.

Further consider that a HD 1 creature only does d4 (2) points of damage, so how will he hurt a hero wearing Chain or Plate? This is fine if the armor progresses in quality as the Monsters and Levels do in difficulty, however if early level players find themselves wearing high end armor - the GM will struggle to offer them genuine threats and challenges as they will shrug of most, if not all damage from low level sources.

ORIGINAL ARMOR

The traditional concept of ascending AC bonuses can still be used with The Black Hack. Attacks are still made by rolling below attributes (such as STR and DEX) however the AC bonus of the target is added to the roll.

For example in ascending AC systems Leather typically adds +2 to a base of 10 (giving you AC12) - with TBH you would roll an attribute test to see if you hit or are able to avoid taking damage, and add +2 to the dice roll. The quick way to read AC from existing resources is just use the last number as a bonus.

This is a more straightforward and simple interpretation of the original rules and it may seem strange that it was not used, however one of the main goals I set myself when designing The Black Hack was to remove 'repetitive dice roll modifiers' entirely, which I think I've almost managed to do - if you don't mind these small instances of arithmetic however - this could well be the purists choice for armor.

FAQ

How many times can you normally move in a turn?

Assuming you don't have any spells cast on you, or some weird and silly fiat - 2 if you give up your action. That means you could get to somewhere far-away.

Does it have to be roll below? Why not on or below?

So even if you have 20 in a stat there's always a legitimate chance of failure.

Armor, how does that work?

You use you armor to soak damage, when armor has soaked its maximum damage you start losing HP. Only when you rest for an hour do you recover your Armor Points. So, for example Plate and Mail is a form of 8 temporary HP.

How many new spells can be added to the spellbook on a level up?

Players in my game have to actively search out spells - but you should do it to suite the preference of all the players at your table. If in doubt, vote on it.

If a PC summons a creature, and I want the player to roll attacks/defenses for the creature, should it use one of the PCs stats, or should it have its own statline and HD?

I would have the PC test their relevant stat - especially for 'throwaway' summoned creatures. Perhaps if it was a more regular cast member (like a certain dark elf's panther pet) I'd give it HD and a single line special ability that fits it narratively.

What do I do resolve situation X?

Ask a player to test an Stat to see if X happens or not, or if that notion feels like overkill - X should probably 'just happen'. Consider powerful opponents and levels for challenges and situations.

There are no bows /1 handed weapons on the equipment list?

Yeah, my bad. Bows should cost the same as 2-Handed weapons. 1 handed weapons should probably be half that.

How far can bows shoot?

The rules state that ranged attacks against Close targets have Disadvantage. Therefore by lack of ruling they can shoot Distant targets, although I'd probably rule that those shots have Disadvantage too.

Why rename Turns and Rounds?

I like the conversational approach of Advantage, Disadvantage, Nearby, Close etc. So saying to a player 'What are you doing this very Moment' whilst in combat makes sense. And asking a player what they doing this very Minute whilst exploring, just works. You can be as abstract or specific as you please. 6 Moments, 10 Minutes or just Moments and Minutes. Whatever you like.

There aren't any guides for the use of Advantage and Disadvantage?

No, it's not in The Black Hack nature to give out comprehensive anything. The GM must develop their own individual 'ass groove'.

Is there no way to make a fight mechanically interesting except the Advantage/Disadvantage ?

Yes loads, but it wouldn't fit the scope of the game to include them. 20 A5 pages is very light. In the DIY community tradition the GM is encouraged to grow the game in the direction that suites them and their table.

Why are their four range bands ?

Because you might want to know how far away something is.

The rules are vague, why?

The Black Hack assumes you already know how to play a roleplaying game. If you don't, and you just happened upon the game - please email me, because I'd love to know how you found it.

A LIVING DOCUMENT

I'll be adding to this document over time, as and when. The version will be updated at the front.

For The Black Hack stuff go to the 'ever-so-memorable' :

http://dngnsndrgns.blogspot.co.uk/