ONE MAN ARMY

Introduction to One Man Army

In the Fifth Edition of Dungeons and Dragons, strength of numbers is king, which is why many pre-written D&D adventures are designed for a party of four or more characters.

With greater numbers available to regular adventuring groups, and with each party member attacking at the same time, an adventuring party can cut down even the mightiest foes in relative short order.

Unfortunately, the same can work in reverse. No matter how powerful your character might be, greater numbers will always win out in the end.

One Man Army is written to help you level the playing ground and, while not all classes are born equal, the rules contained in this document aim to increase the survivability of your solo character, so he or she has a far greater chance of seeing an adventure or campaign to its conclusion.

This book contains three different systems called templates that can be chosen depending on your playstyle and preferences.

The Slayer template is ideal for players who like to keep things simple and would prefer not to overburden their game with new rules.

The Chosen One should appeal to players who love accumulating and experimenting with the myriad of character options in Dungeons and Dragons.

The Grandmaster template is for players who take satisfaction in combat and inflicting massive amounts of damage upon his enemies.

Regardless of which system you choose, each is designed to help balance a four player adventure for one character without going through the process of re-adapting an adventure.

Template I: The Slayer

This template adds a simple mechanic designed to increase the survival of your character by significantly blunting the effectiveness of your enemy attacks. It also adds a new action to level the playing field, so that the solo character has a much better chance of walking away alive from a battle that would normally crush a single character within a couple of rounds.

This template is also designed to be simple to learn and the aim is to ensure that combat can be over and done with quickly, so that you may focus more on the true fun of D&D: roleplaying.

Taking Damage From Enemy Attacks

The few adventurers who dare to brave the perils of the adventuring profession on their own eventually discover that they have an uncanny knack of getting out of the way of danger.

Crippling blows become grazes, a young dragon's breath singes rather than incinerates and traps have little to no effect on such an elusive foe.

In game terms, this means that the lone adventurer takes significantly less damage than the average adventurer would.

Instead of taking normal damage from an enemy attack, damage is determined by rolling damage as normal for your opponent and reducing the result by a factor of five before rounding down.

For example, if a hobgoblin that normally does 1d8 + 1 points of damage rolls a 6 and adds the +1 bonus for a total of 7. Dividing this result by 5 and rounding down gives you 1.

Similarly, if you were facing an ancient red dragon and the dragon inflicts 93 points of damage with its fiery breath, you would take 18 points of damage ($93 \div 5 = 18.6 \approx 18$).

Damage and Side Effects

Using this rule, it's possible that a weak opponent will roll 0-4, resulting in no damage at all.

If a creature hits, but fails to deal any damage to you, any side effects in addition to damage are ignored.

For example, a ghoul that strikes you for 0 damage does not affect you with its paralyzing touch. By the same token, a wolf that inflicts no damage against you cannot knock you prone.

Critical Hits

Critical hits always do at least one point of damage, even if the result of the damage roll is 0-4.

New Action: Slaying Strike

A Slaying Strike is a new action available to your solo character.

It involves making an all-or-nothing attack roll that has a chance of instantly slaying a creature with a certain amount of hit points or less, depending on your character level:

Character Level	1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19
Slay Damage	25	30	50	55	60	80	85	90	95	115

To perform a Slaying Strike, simply make an attack roll as normal using whatever weapon or cantrip is available to you.

If the attack hits and your opponent's current hit point value is equal to or less than the Slay Damage for your level, you instantly slay your opponent. For example, if you are 6th level character, you would instantly slay any creature that currently has 50 hit points or less.

A Slaying Strike is not considered an attack action despite the fact it requires an attack roll and can potentially kill a creature, therefore it cannot interact with other rules that come into play when an attack action is made.

E.g., the Extra Attack feature will not grant you two Slaying Strikes, you cannot use an off-hand weapon after a Slaying Strike, a monk cannot use his martial arts class feature after making a Slaying Strike, and so on.

Prepared spells cannot be used to slay an opponent.

A Slaying Strike uses up ammunition like any other ranged attack.

A Slaying Strike may also be used to knock out an opponent rather than kill it.

Only one Slaying Strike may be attempted per round.

Resistances and Vulnerabilities

If a creature has resistance to your damage type, your Slay Damage is halved (round down). If it is vulnerable, it is doubled.

Natural 1 and Natural 20

Rolling a 20 on a 20-sided die before modifiers are added always results in a hit whenever you attempt a Slaying Strike. However, Slay Damage is not doubled when you roll a 20.

Rolling a 1 on a 20-sided die before modifiers are added is a critical miss as normal.

Template II: The Chosen One

While other templates in this book changes how combat works in Dungeons and Dragons, this template makes no changes to the normal D&D combat rules. Instead, it introduces a tiered health system designed to ensure your character is able to withstand more damage than a typical character.

A dual class system for character creation and advancement is also added to give your character a greater wealth of options.

The aim of the latter is to increase the versatility of your character to the point he or she can effectively fulfil many different roles on his or her own, something that is normally not possible under the normal rules.

This template should also offer the character more options in combat and experienced players who enjoy character building should welcome the scope of character customization that this template offers.

Character Creation and Advancement

Your character begins his or her adventuring career at 1st level in **two** classes and all class features are cumulative – including Ability Score Improvements.

When you accumulate enough experience points to gain a new character level, you gain a new level in both classes at the same time.

Character advancement follows the same progression as any regular character (D&D Player's Basic Rules Version 0.3, *page 10*, and Player's Handbook, *page 15*).

This dual class system essentially follows all the rules for multiclassing, including pre-requisites, class features and spellcasting (see *D&D Player's Basic Rules Version 0.3*, page 56, and *Player's Handbook*, page 163).

Notable exceptions are as follows:

Proficiencies

Your character gains all the proficiencies of both classes, plus your chosen background. This includes all armour, weapon, tool, saving throw and skill proficiencies.

If both classes grant the same saving throw proficiency, they do not stack. You may not choose another saving throw proficiency to make up for this.

For example, both the cleric and druid classes grant the Wisdom Saving Throw proficiency. A player who wishes to play a cleric/druid will only have three saving throw proficiencies as a result (Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma), compared to a cleric/monk who has four (Strength, Dexterity, Wisdom and Charisma).

Unarmoured Defence

If you are a barbarian/monk, you may choose which ability your unarmoured defence class feature is keyed to (constitution for barbarians, wisdom for monks).

Once made, the decision is binding and cannot be changed.

Multiclassing

If you choose to use the Chosen One template, it is recommended that you do not add a third class through multiclassing, because this may further complicate the game while adding very little to it.

The stacking of ability score improvements is permitted on the basis that you can obtain certain abilities outside your area of specialization without needing to take levels in a third class, particularly if you use feats in your game.

Damage and Healing

This template replaces the default hit point system used in Dungeons and Dragons.

This system is unique to the player character. All other NPCs and characters continue to use the default Dungeons and Dragons hit point system.

State of Health

Actual injuries are represented by a four level State of Health system. The four States of Health are:

- Healthy
- Lightly Wounded
- Wounded
- Seriously Wounded

You begin your adventuring life at 'Healthy'. Your State of Health will change throughout the course of your adventure as you fight, take damage and heal.

Stamina Points

In Dungeons and Dragons, Hit Points do not merely represent how much damage a character can endure, but rather it is a combination of many different things such as determination, willpower and fortune.

This template introduces a new concept and an alternative way of keeping track of damage, by replacing the default hit point system with **Stamina**.

Each heavy blow you block or absorb will leave you increasingly out of breath.

Every near miss taxes you more as you struggle to avert or deflect an incoming attack, until fatigue eventually presents your opponent with the opening to strike a telling blow.

Other than the cosmetic differences, Stamina essentially functions the same way hit points do in any regular game of Dungeons and Dragons.

You determine your maximum Stamina for each level you gain by rolling the Hit Die for both classes you choose for your character, adding them together on top of your constitution modifier. You begin with Stamina equal to the highest rolls of both Hit Dice at level 1 plus your constitution modifier.

As an example, a character with 13 Constitution begins at level 1 in both the cleric and fighter classes, therefore he has a total Stamina score of 19 (maximum results of both hit dice of 1d8 + 1d10, plus Constitution modifier of 1). When the character gains a new

level, he rolls 1d8 and 1d10 and adds the results together, before adding the constitution bonus of 1 to determine his new Stamina total. Alternatively, he can simply forgo rolling and take the averages instead.

Taking Damage During Combat

Damage taken during combat is deducted from your Stamina value. Once is reduced to 0, your State of Health drops by one level (from Healthy to Lightly Wounded, from Lightly Wounded to Wounded, and so on).

If you suffer excess damage greater or equal to your maximum Stamina, your State of Health drops by two levels.

In any case, your Stamina is reset back to its maximum value and your enemies must reduce your Stamina through damage in order to reduce your State of Health further.

Also, whenever your Stamina is reduced to 0 and your State of Health drops by one level, **all** temporary conditions and effects, including those from spells and special attacks such as spider's web and grappling, immediately end, provided you are still conscious. If a spell or effect allows you to ignore further applications of an effect for 24 hours after a successful saving throw, ending the effect in this fashion also confers the same immunity to the effect for 24 hours.

Your Stamina is reset to maximum when combat ends, but your State of Health will not improve or change unless you apply healing or take further damage.

Dying

If your Stamina is reduced to 0 while you are at the 'Seriously Wounded' state, you are unconscious and must make death saving throws in order to stabilize.

If you stabilize and regain consciousness, you begin with 1 Stamina point and your State of Health remains at 'Seriously Wounded'. Your Stamina also remains at 1 until you take a short rest, after which your stamina is reset to maximum.

Instant Death

If your current State of Health is 'Seriously Wounded' or 'Dying', taking excess damage greater or equal to your maximum Stamina value results in instant death (see *D&D Player's Basic Rules Version 0.3*, page 75, and the *Player's Handbook*, page 197).

Environmental Damage

If you take damage outside of a combat encounter such as from traps, falling or other environmental hazards, any damage taken reduces your maximum Stamina

permanently until you regain the relevant amount of Stamina through curative magic, rest and other means that restore Hit Points.

If your Stamina is reduced to 0 as a result of taking environmental damage, you are automatically reduced to the 'Dying' state, regardless of your current State of Health.

Note that this type of damage can occur even in combat situations, such as when an opponent knocks you off a ledge or if you step on a trap as you are charging towards your enemies.

If the excess damage equals or exceeds your maximum stamina value, you die instantly as normal.

For removal of doubt, whenever your Stamina becomes 0 while you are at any given State of Health, your State of Health is automatically lowered by one level.

Improving Your State of Health

If your State of Health is lower than 'healthy', you may attempt to improve your state of health through normal healing methods such as rest and recuperation, magic and other relevant means available to you.

Your State of Health improves by one level if you restore an amount equal to one-quarter of your maximum Stamina value, rounded down.

Outside combat, healing is cumulative and does not need to be applied all at once to improve your State of Health. For example, if 8 stamina points of healing is required to

improve your State of Health by one level, you could restore 5 points by drinking a *potion of healing* before heading to the nearest town to find a cleric who can heal the remaining 3 points needed.

However, any damage taken in the interim means you must heal from scratch. I.e. instead of requiring only 3 points of healing, taking any amount of damage means you must now heal the full amount of 8 stamina points to improve your State of Health – either all at once or in increments as described above.

With your stamina already reset to maximum after every combat encounter, note that any healing outside combat will not restore any Stamina points.

If you enter combat in the interim, you must use the combat healing rules as outlined below:

Healing During Combat

Healing in combat follows the same general rules as outlined above, except healing does restore lost stamina points. You must also heal one-quarter of your maximum Stamina value in one single application to improve your state of health by one level.

For example, if you needed to heal 8 points to improve your state of health, healing 7 points or less will restore lost stamina points, but will not improve your State of Health.

You cannot improve your stamina beyond the maximum, so any excess healing is lost. However, you may continue to heal beyond your maximum Stamina value for the sole purpose of improving your State of Health.

Increasing or Decreasing Maximum Stamina

Temporary hit points function as normal.

On the other hand, any effect that reduces your maximum hit point total permanently reduces your maximum Stamina until the relevant means are used to restore your Stamina back to its original maximum value.

Short Rest

You may expend hit dice to improve the health of your character, just as you would in any normal game of Dungeons and Dragons. The difference is that you will have 2 hit dice per character level – one for each character class you've chosen – and these count as a single hit die rather than two separate hit dice. Both dice are rolled when you expend a hit die.

Remember that your Stamina will already be at maximum after every encounter, so expenditure of hit dice simply improves your State of Health and no Stamina is gained.

Keeping Track of Your Health

You may find it easier to keep track of your State of Health in a table.

Below is an example table showing a character that is currently in combat – and also in less than optimal condition. The character is level 1 in both the cleric and fighter classes.

State of Health	
State of Health	**Stamina 19 (Max 19)**
Healthy	0
Lightly Wounded	0
Wounded	11
Seriously Wounded	19
Dying	–

As you can see from the example table, this cleric/fighter is currently in a bit of a bind. He began combat at the 'Healthy' state, but is now currently 'Wounded' and can only take up to 11 points of damage before his State of Health drops to 'Seriously Wounded'.

However, he has access healing magic as a cleric, and if he casts *cure light wounds* and restores 4 points of Stamina (equal to one-quarter of his maximum Stamina rounded down), his State of Health will improve by one level to 'Lightly Wounded'. His Stamina increases by 4 points to 15, so this is the amount of damage his enemies will need to inflict in order to drop him back to the 'Wounded' state:

State of Health	
State of Health	**Stamina 19 (Max 19)**
Healthy	0
Lightly Wounded	15
Wounded	19
Seriously Wounded	19
Dying	–

Variant: Wound Points

Instead of the State of Health rules, you may use a Wound Point system instead.

You begin with a number of Wound Points equal to 1 + your constitution modifier (minimum 1), so if your constitution is 14, you have 3 Wound points – and therefore only three effective Levels of Health.

This variant system rewards characters with high constitution bonuses and would therefore be suitable for characters who do not have a wealth of magical abilities to draw upon in combat (such as fighter/rogues), compared to characters who are able to heal or teleport away from danger (such as cleric/wizards).

Conversely, characters with a low constitution must choose their battles carefully, but some players may welcome the challenge, or feel that obtaining more Wound Points as their characters improve goes hand in hand with the character progression and advancement.

Under this variant, some player characters can potentially take far more damage than most any character to the point they are beyond even a party of four regular characters – particularly those with 20 levels in the barbarian class (and/or those fortunate enough stumble across a *manual of bodily health*)!

Variant: Exhaustion as State of Health

This variant rule is suitable for solo players who enjoy a grittier campaign than normal, without dealing with the possibility of a quick death when playing a single character under the normal Dungeons and Dragons rules.

However, each battle must be chosen carefully in order to minimize the amount of damage you can potentially take in combat.

Under this variant, exhaustion replaces the State of Health system in that each level of Exhaustion represents a level of health. (*D&D Player's Basic Rules Version 0.3*, page 106, and *Player's Handbook*, page 291).

This exhaustion is treated differently to normal exhaustion, therefore it should be tracked separately. This variant rule is designed to mimic injuries that are crippling in some way, reducing your ability to fight at full effectiveness as combat wears on and the pain of injury hinders your every movement.

As with the normal rules for exhaustion, you may reduce your exhaustion by one level after a long rest, so being extremely exhausted would require almost a full week of recovery.

Your stamina is not restored back to maximum at the end of an encounter. It must be restored as normal using whatever means are available to you (magic, rest and so on).

Template III: The Grandmaster

This template is a high-powered option for your solo character which is designed to compensate for the lack of party members by granting your solo character hyper-competence in combat. The system presented here potentially allows your character to inflict huge amounts of damage in a single round with a series of good attack rolls.

It also addresses one of the fundamental problems of solo play: the tedium of missing your attacks, several rounds in a row, while your enemies in their large numbers consistently chip away at your health, making defeat all but inevitable.

This combat template is designed to be fast, fun and exciting, with fewer misses, wasted combat rounds, and unnecessarily prolonged combat that causes no end of frustration for the player.

The Attack Roll

When using this template, both player characters and enemies will hit with varying degrees of success. You make an attack roll as normal for either the player character or your opponent and get one of the following results:

- **Miss.** The attack misses completely and deals no damage.
- **Near Miss.** The attack hits, but deals only 1 point of damage regardless of the size and number of damage dice.
- **Scratch.** The attack hits and does half damage.
- **Hit.** The attack hits and does normal damage.
- **Crit.** Short for Critical Hit. The attack hits and does double dice damage.

There is one other result that is available to the player character:

Kill. The attack Crits and inflicts extra damage equal to the ability score used for the attack. It also instantly slays an opponent with a challenge rating equal to one-quarter your character level. In this case, you forgo the damage roll which allows you to save special abilities, such as sneak attack which may only be inflicted once per round, for the next attack instead.

However, lesser NPCs with resistance to your damage will not be slain instantly, but will still suffer extra damage equal to your ability score (halved as appropriate). A Kill may occur only once per round.

The probability of getting a Hit, Crit, Scratch, etc. is higher for the player character than an NPC attacking the player character. This is summarized below.

Your Character vs. NPCs

When your character attacks another creature, you will get one of several results, depending on how well you roll:

- **Miss.** You miss the NPC's armour class by 10 or more – or you roll a natural 1.
- **Near Miss.** You miss the NPC's armour class by 5 or more, up to 9.
- **Scratch.** You miss the NPC's armour class by 4 or less.
- **Hit.** Your roll is equal to or exceeds the NPC's armour class by 4 or less.
- **Crit.** Your attack roll exceeds the NPC's armour class by 5 or more and qualifies as a **Hit**.
- **Kill.** You roll 20 on a 20-sided die and the modified result of the roll qualifies as a **Hit** or better. A roll of 20 on a 20-sided die will always be a **Crit**.

These rolls are summarized in the table below:

Player Character					
	Miss	**Near Miss**	**Scratch**	**Hit**	**Crit**	**Kill**
Target Number Required	AC -10	AC -5 to -9	AC -1 to -4	AC +0 to +4	AC +5 or Higher + **Hit**	Natural 20 + **Hit**

Some abilities or items allow a character to score a critical hit on a natural roll of 19 or an even lower number. In these cases, a Kill results from rolling these numbers naturally on a 20-sided die as well.

NPCs vs. Your Character

NPCs making attack rolls against you will get one of the following results:

- **Miss.** The NPC's attack roll is lower than your armour class.
- **Near Miss.** The NPC's attack roll is equal to or greater than your armour class by 4 or less.
- **Scratch:** The NPC's attack roll exceeds your armour class by 5, up to 9.
- **Hit:** The NPC's attack roll exceeds your armour class by 10 or more.
- **Crit:** The NPC rolls a 20 on a 20-sided die and the modified attack roll qualifies as a **Hit**.

These rolls are summarized in the table below:

NPC						
	Miss	**Near Miss**	**Scratch**	**Hit**	**Crit**	**Kill**
Target Number Required	Lower Than AC	AC +0 to +4	AC +5 to +9	AC +10 or Higher	Natural 20 + **Hit**	N/A

Encounter Table

To better keep track of the target numbers required for a Miss, Near Miss, Scratch, Hit, Crit or Kill, you may wish to use the encounter tables to record the numbers before resolving combat. Printable encounter tables are provided at the end of this chapter.

In these sample encounter tables, the player character is a cleric called Anders Brightwood facing four goblins in combat. Anders has an armour class of 18, while the goblins each have an armour class of 15.

Player Encounter Table vs. Goblin (AC: 15)						
	Miss	**Near Miss**	**Scratch**	**Hit**	**Crit**	**Kill**
Target Number Required	5 or Lower or Natural 1	6-10	11-14	**15**-19	20 or Higher	20 or Higher + Natural 20

Goblin's Encounter Table vs. Anders Brightwood (AC: 18)						
	Miss	**Near Miss**	**Scratch**	**Hit**	**Crit**	**Kill**
Target Number Required	17 or Lower or Natural 1	**18**-22	23-27	28 or Higher	Natural 20 + **Hit**	N/A

Follow Up Attacks

If your attack roll results in a **Crit** or a **Kill**, the attack triggers a **Follow up Attack**. Follow Up attacks are available only to your character.

In narrative terms, this is the result of scoring an attack so devastating that it momentarily stuns, stalls or otherwise pushes your opponent off balance. This presents a small opening that your character may take advantage of.

A Follow up Attack is treated the same as any other attack which means it can Miss, Nearly Miss, Scratch, Hit, Crit and even Kill. Therefore if a Follow up Attack is a Crit or a Kill, it can also trigger an additional Follow up Attack. This means that a series of exceptional rolls can snowball with devastating results.

Any attack that requires an attack roll may be used as a Follow up Attack, except spells that must be prepared in advance. Thus, a *scorching ray* may trigger a *ray of frost* as a Follow up Attack if the *scorching ray* crits, but not the other way round, nor can a *scorching ray* trigger another *scorching ray* or any other prepared spell.

You can make a number of Follow up Attacks equal to the ability modifier of the ability used to make the attack in any single round (Strength for longswords, Dexterity for longbows, intelligence for wizard spells, etc.).
When you make a Follow up Attack, it must be made using the same ability score used for the triggering attack and a weapon you are currently wielding until the beginning of the next round. If you are using magic, you may freely choose which cantrip to use for your Follow up Attack as long as it uses the same ability modifier as the triggering spell.

For example, if you scored a Crit using a longsword, you cannot make the subsequent Follow up Attack using a dart or a cantrip such as *ray of frost*, nor can you switch to another weapon.

However, you could switch from using the versatile longsword one-handed to using it two-handed and vice versa, as long as you have both hands free or, if you are wielding two weapons, you could make the Follow up Attack using either weapon (though remember your offhand attack does not include your ability modifier, unless you have the relevant fighting style). Finally, if a melee weapon can be thrown, you may throw the weapon as part of a Follow up Attack instead of using it at close range.

You may move between Follow up Attacks just like you could with normal attacks, provided you have movement remaining.

You may choose to forgo making a Follow up Attack altogether.

Note that some weapons may be unsuited for Follow up Attacks, such as weapons with the **loading** property like all crossbows (unless you have the relevant feat that mitigates this).

If you are prevented from making multiple attacks, such as by the *slow* spell, you are unable to make Follow up Attacks at all.

Ripostes

Your solo character also has the opportunity to make a Riposte if your opponent misses his attack roll by 5 or more.

A Riposte counts as a Follow up Attack for the purpose of determining how many Riposte attacks can be made in a single round, but they cannot be chained together like normal Follow up Attacks can be and is triggered only when the opponent misses his attack roll by 5 or more.

Thus, if you have no Follow up Attacks remaining, you are unable to make a Riposte attack until the beginning of the next round.

Any condition that denies you your reaction also denies you your ability to make Riposte attacks.

If you take the **dodge** action, you may not make riposte attacks until the beginning of your next turn.

Follow up Attacks and Opportunity Attacks

Follow up Attacks and Ripostes do not count against opportunity attacks or other rules, abilities or feats that allow additional attacks.

Automatic Hits

Some spells and abilities automatically inflict damage upon your character without the chance of a saving throw or the need for an attack roll from your opponent (for example: *magic missile*, *fire shield*).

Damage from these sources are treated as Scratches, except they inflict one-quarter damage instead of half damage. This damage is subject to damage resistance as normal.

Environmental Damage

Damage from the environment (falling, traps and so on) is calculated using the normal D&D rules.

Saving Throws

Saving throws use similar mechanics as the attack rolls to determine the effectiveness of a spell or effect.

- **Miss.** The spell or effect does not affect a creature.
- **Near Miss.** The spell or effect does 1 point of damage, or affects a creature for only one round.
- **Scratch.** The spell or effect's duration and/or damage are halved.
- **Hit.** The spell or effect affects a creature normally and/or does full damage.
- **Crit.** The duration or damage of a spell or effect is doubled.
- **Kill.** As Crit, but the ability score used for damage dealing effects is added to the damage and any creatures with challenge ratings one-quarter your character level are instantly slain. If the spell has a duration, it is increased by a number of rounds equal to your ability modifier and the creature cannot repeat the saving throw to shake off an effect (as with spells such as *hold person*) and must wait until the duration expires, the caster's concentration is disrupted or the spell is dispelled. A Kill occurs only once per round.

Whenever a failed saving throw against a spell or effect triggers an additional effect that requires its own saving throw, this additional saving throw is not required if the first saving throw results in a Scratch or Near Miss.

Some physical attacks may have additional effects that trigger a saving throw from a creature whenever it hits (e.g. poisonous bite of a giant spider). If the attack results in a Scratch or Near Miss against the creature, the creature automatically succeeds on the saving throw against the additional effect.

Like attack rolls, the probabilities are skewed in favour of the lone character:

Against the Player Character

When your character makes a saving throw against a spell, one of several things will occur:

- **Miss.** Your roll equals or exceeds the saving throw DC.
- **Near Miss.** You fail the saving throw by 4 points or less.
- **Scratch.** You fail the saving throw by 5 points or more, up to 9.
- **Hit.** You fail the saving throw by 10 points or more.

The numbers given above also apply to characters with the evasion ability who make saving throws to take half damage on a successful save (such as being subject to a *fireball* spell). In such cases, characters with the evasion ability can never suffer a Hit.

If your character does not have the evasion ability and must make a saving throw against spells that inflict half damage on a successful save:

- **Miss.** You beat the saving throw DC by 5 or more.
- **Near Miss.** Your roll equals or exceeds the DC by 4 or less.
- **Scratch.** You fail the saving throw by 4 points or less.
- **Hit.** You fail the saving throw by 5 points or more.

Concentration Saving Throws and Near-Misses

If your concentration saving throw results in a Near Miss, you lose concentration on your spell for 1 round. On the second round, you regain concentration and the spell continues to function as normal. Any missed rounds of concentration resulting from a Near Miss count towards the total duration of the spell.

If a spell or effect allows you to make further saving throws to shake it off (e.g. *hold person*, frightful presence, etc.), you automatically succeed on this saving throw if your initial saving throw is a Near Miss.

However, any effect that denies you an action needed to maintain concentration on a spell results in you losing the spell as normal. For example, if you are under the effects of a *hold person* spell, you must make a saving throw at the end of your next turn to shake off the effect. This means you will miss your action, which would be needed to maintain concentration on the spell, and thus you will lose your spell.

Against NPCs

- **Miss.** The NPC beats the saving throw DC by 10 or more.
- **Near Miss.** The NPC beats the saving throw DC by 5 points or more, up to 9.
- **Scratch.** The NPC beats the saving throw DC by 4 points or less.
- **Hit.** The NPC fails the saving throw by 4 or less.
- **Crit.** The NPC fails the saving throw by 5 or more, up to 9.
- **Kill.** The NPC rolls 1 on a 20 sided die before modifiers, and the modified saving throw result is low enough for the spell or effect to be at least a **Hit**.

If an NPC has evasion and is forced to make a saving throw against a spell you cast that inflicts half damage on a successful save:

- **Miss.** The NPC beats the saving throw DC by 5 or more.
- **Near Miss.** The NPC equals or beats the saving throw DC by 4 points or less.
- **Scratch.** The NPC fails the saving throw.

	Miss	Near Miss	Scratch	Hit	Crit	Kill
Target Number Required						

	Miss	Near Miss	Scratch	Hit	Crit	Kill
Target Number Required						

	Miss	Near Miss	Scratch	Hit	Crit	Kill
Target Number Required						

	Miss	Near Miss	Scratch	Hit	Crit	Kill
Target Number Required						

	Miss	Near Miss	Scratch	Hit	Crit	Kill
Target Number Required						

	Miss	Near Miss	Scratch	Hit	Crit	Kill
Target Number Required						

	Miss	Near Miss	Scratch	Hit	Crit	Kill
Target Number Required						

General Rules

Regardless of which template you use, the following rules apply to any Dungeons and Dragons campaign using One Man Army.

PC vs. NPC Only

Unless otherwise stated, the mechanics given in each template apply only when a player character engages an NPC. NPCs (including enemies, summoned or dominated creatures, and hirelings) fighting it out amongst themselves must use the default D&D rules for combat.

Character Creation

Character creation for a character using One Man Army follows the same general guidelines as any regular game of Dungeons and Dragons.

In terms of generating ability scores, the array, 4d6 drop lowest die or point buy are recommended.

Rewards

One Man Army makes combat viable for a solo character by reducing the effectiveness of enemy attacks and/or increasing the toughness, power or damage dealt by the character.

However, most adventures assume four players by default and this is the basic assumption when it comes to determining and distributing rewards. For the solo character, this would mean accelerated character progression and acquiring more wealth than the character has a right to have.

Consequently, all rewards will be scaled accordingly as follows:

Experience Points and Treasure

Your solo character receives one-quarter all experience point rewards. For example, defeating a bugbear would give you a total of 200xp, but for a solo character using One Man Army, he or she would only get 50xp.

Occasionally, a pre-written adventure may instruct you to award X number of experience points *per character*. In this case, simply award XP as instructed.

Similarly, all coin-based and valuable treasure such as art items, gems and jewelry are also reduced to one quarter of their original value.

This does not change an item's value for the purpose of qualifying as a material component for a spell. For example, if you find a diamond worth 300gp, you may only sell it for 75gp, but it is still a 300gp diamond for the purpose of qualifying as a material component for a *revivify* spell.

Fighting Alongside NPCs

If NPCs (including henchmen you hire, creatures you summon, etc.) contribute significantly to any combat you are involved in, any experience points awarded to you will be reduced by a factor of 4 + the number of NPCs that helped you.

Permanent Magic Items

Like most rewards in an adventure, the distribution of magic items is based on the assumption there are four characters involved in the adventure.

You could potentially end up with more magic items than any one single character has any right to possess, and this problem would be exacerbated if magic items cannot be bought or sold.

One solution to this problem is to simply ignore items that your character cannot use due to racial, class or other restrictions.

However, at higher levels, some characters may gain the ability to use these items through class abilities or feats. As well, many adventures will contain several items that can be used by virtually anyone, which means a solo character may take and use them all.

To address this problem, one of the following rules may be used:

Downtime Distribution

Under this rule, all magic items may only be identified during downtime.

The exception to this rule is if an item is important to the story and must come into play during the adventure in order to advance the story.

For every four items you pick up, you may choose one item only and discard the rest. Discarded items are lost to you forever.

Plot items are the exception to this rule. However, unless the plot item is chosen as the magic item you keep during Downtime Distribution, it disappears once its purpose has been served.

One Item per Level

You may acquire and use no more than a number of permanent magic items equal to your character level. Thus, a level 11 character may only possess and use 11 permanent magic items.

Unlike Downtime Distribution, you do not need to wait until the end before identifying and using magic items.

As long as you do not exceed the limit for the number of magic items permitted for your level, you may pick up any number of magic items and keep and use them.

Any items you discard can be sold, given away or simply disappear from your game.

Consumable Magic Items

For the sake of simplicity, any consumable magic items such as potions and their numbers shall remain unchanged.

Optional Injury and Death Rules

A member of a regular four character party can usually count on their companions for aid whenever they are injured or if they are at the brink of death.

It is even possible to bring a character back if they cross over completely: a cleric of sufficient level and material resources can call upon the gods to bring the dead character back. If a cleric is not readily available to the party, then resurrection magic may be purchased elsewhere.

Solo characters, on the other hand, do not have this luxury.

If they are wounded, they must seek their own healing. If they are brought low, it is left to fate whether or not they survive and stabilize.

If they die, having all the diamonds in the world will not make a difference - they'll just be looted – since they cannot cast *raise dead* upon themselves.

The following optional rules are designed to facilitate survival for players wishing to play Dungeons and Dragons on their own.

Faster Healing

As a solo character, instant healing may be difficult to come by if you are not a cleric or if your character lives in a low-magic world where healing potions are hard to come by.

To make up for the lack of healing, you may maximise any Hit Dice you expend when restoring hit points during a short rest, instead of rolling as usual.

Left for Dead

Under this rule, you are left for dead and are automatically stable when reduced to 0 hit points.

The exception to this is if the enemy you face is likely to feed upon your remains, or you end up in a situation where death is unavoidable (such as being knocked unconscious while underwater).

Assume that you wake up where you fell by default, though occasionally you may be relocated (thrown out of the dungeon, for example), depending on who you faced and where you were at the time.

Depending on who you face, you may also be stripped of all valuable possessions such as money, gems, obviously magical items, and so forth.

If an adventure specifically mentions what happens to you after your defeat, this overrides the Left for Dead rule.

If you are defeated by the same encounter twice, your enemies will be more likely to follow through and make sure you are dead; unless they have exceptionally low intelligence or none at all (e.g. golems, skeletons and zombies).

Nine Lives

If you are killed or stuck in a situation where there is no escape, you may attempt the same encounter again – or return to a safe point in time just before you were stuck.

Alternatively, you could restart an entire dungeon or area again.

You may only do this nine times in any single character's adventuring career. Once all nine 'lives' are used up and your character dies or becomes stuck in an inescapable situation, death is permanent and there is no escape.

This could be a suitable system for players who expect a combat heavy campaign and focus less on roleplaying.

Divine Aid

Many adventurers willingly serve a greater power, be they clerics, paladins or druids. Even a character who has no special connection to any particular deity may nonetheless venerate a greater power, pledging to serve the power with the talents that she possesses.

Sometimes a character so exceptional is born into the world that her patron deity reserves special attention for the individual, because the deity knows that the individual has the potential to shape the world for the better – or throw it into chaos.

The character devotes herself to the deity and frequently offers material sacrifices as a sign of her devotion.

In return, that power will watch over the individual and give her a second chance whenever her need is great.

When mortally wounded, the solo character may pray to the greater power that she venerates. When this happens, the power takes pity on the individual and, at some point following the solo character's death, she is miraculously returned to life by the power.

In game terms, you are essentially buying a *revivify*, *raise dead* or *resurrection* spell in advance. You must pay a priest of your deity with the relevant service fee and material components.

Whenever the character dies, she is revived, raised or resurrected, depending on the spell purchased in advance.

You may only purchase one spell at a time.

Variant: Roleplay – Or No Aid

Favour of the Powers assumes that your character is wholeheartedly devoted to the greater power that he or she serves.

However, the forces aligned against the character would like nothing more than to see the character corrupted (or redeemed). Many characters will fall away from what the deity considers straight and narrow at some point in their lives, temporarily or otherwise.

In many of these cases, these individuals may lose connection to the greater power they once shared a bonded with, along with all the benefits that come along with it.

The character must then begin a journey of atonement if they are to win their gods' favour once more – or if they have fallen too far, find someone else to worship.

In the same way, a greater power that will happily aid a character on the verge of death may withhold the aid, until the individual repents – or seeks a new patron to serve. In the latter case, the new patron becomes the one who grants aid and favour upon the character – but only after the character proves his or her devotion by performing a difficult task of the new patron's choosing.

This variant rule is designed to encourage roleplay. As a character who serves a higher power, you must always uphold the tenets of your faith, even in trying circumstances.

Falling off the straight and narrow path is probably inevitable, but you must always seek to make amends afterwards and atone in order to continue enjoying the benefits granted by your patron.

Optional: Starting Material Components

Normally, paying for a resurrection spell requires that you pay the relevant material component costs on top of the spellcasting service fee.

If you wish to have the assurance early on in the game, you may begin your adventuring career with the material component for a *revivify* spell.

Rather than simply writing a 300gp diamond onto your character sheet, attempt to tie it to your character's background.

Perhaps it is a diamond studded ring that your mother left behind. Or maybe the diamond is permanently locked inside an item of sentimental value. It could even be an amulet that a superstitious spouse gave you, believing that the item will grant you 'good luck'.

Other Optional Rules

Below is a selection of optional rules that you may add to your game as you see fit. Some of these rules are designed to increase the overall power of your character.

Quick to React

Every split second counts when you are a lone adventurer, so you have learned to react quickly to danger.

You may treat your d20 roll as a 20 whenever you determine initiative in combat.

All other creatures must roll as normal.

From Dungeon Master's Guide

There are other options in the Core Rulebooks that may be useful for a solo player. For example, the Dungeon Master contains variant resting rules for players who do not like waiting around and want to keep the adventure moving.

Healing Surge

Healing surges are a great way for any class to regain much needed hit points during a challenging combat encounter, particularly if you use a bonus action to do this.

Multiple Characters and Joining a Gaming Group

Because One Man Army was designed for players wanting to play an adventure balanced for four players on their own, it goes without saying that you must exercise caution when introducing other players into the same adventure.

In this scenario, it would be best to revert to the normal Dungeons & Dragons Fifth Edition rules so that the game remains balanced.

It may even be wise to roll up a new character and start a new campaign entirely using different character. After all, how would you explain your character taking out scores of enemies using the Grandmaster template one minute, and struggling to defeat a pair of goblins the next?

A Final Word

It's important to remember that the templates in this book will not necessarily make your character equivalent to four characters of the same level. I have gone with what I felt was balanced during my own playtesting.

The One Man Army rules were designed to make published four-player adventures viable for a single character, but there will still be limits to what each character can do.

For example, a rogue will always be a rogue and playing a rogue character as you would do a fighter is a sure path to an early grave.

Therefore, you must choose your battles carefully before charging in. If your tendency is to strike first and ask questions later no matter who you face, your next battle could well be your last.

I hope you enjoy using One Man Army as I did making it.