

## **PREPARE TO DIE**

### **WHAT IS DEATHBRINGER?**

Deathbringer is a streamlined, grimdark version of the world's most popular tabletop roleplaying game. It is not a game so much as a "kit"—a toolbox of hacks to create a fast-paced, grittier game.

These rules can be used by themselves or imported into any 5E game or OSR retro-clone. Feel free to pick and choose which rules you use. Think of Deathbringer as the secret sauce on your RPG burger.

### **WHY IS DEATHBRINGER?**

We enjoy RPGS where death is a real possibility and danger lurks around every corner. We like PCs who are gritty antiheroes struggling to survive in a hostile world. We also like games that feel less like a tactical exercise and more like movies—where players use natural language like: "I sneak up behind him and stab him in the kidney," as opposed to, "I move three squares and flank him for an opportunity attack."

In Deathbringer, you are not limited by what is written on your character sheet. Deathbringer Dice make it possible for any character to swing from a chandelier, smite an enemy, or turn a leg of mutton into an improvised weapon—because every character has a right to kill someone with a leg of mutton.

Enough talk! Go, and may your death be one worth remembering.



## **FOLD, YOU FOOLS**

### **A MEAGER HOW-TO**

Save space, fold things fast, and tuck away your Deathbringer rules in your go-to journal with this tri-fold—I mean DIE-FOLD—rules brief.

Print pages 2-3 of this PDF, double sided, preferably on heavyweight paper. Then, fold on the dotted lines as shown. The streets will run red with your dire work, and fun will be had by all.



### **CHARACTER SHEETS**

Page 4 features a Deathbringer character sheet. This terrifyingly organized array of facts and figures will be your only lifeline in the doom-filled darkness ahead, so just use a pen and a blowtorch.

### **OTHER STUFF**

For more pathetic downloads, videos, and other futile materials to fight back the shadow, use these links, and may all your rolls be 20s!

Dungeoncraft and Professor DM on youtube.  
Dungeoncraft Patreon Page

Dungeoncraft Facebook Group

## CRITICAL MISCAST

- 1-10:** Fizzle - Spell fails. Ghostly laughter fills the room.
- 11-15:** Backfire - Caster takes the damage or effect.
- 16-19:** Disaster - e.g. Caster ages d20 years, loses a level, gains a mutation, summons a hostile monster, disintegrates all armor with 100 feet, hits the wrong target for full damage, or something equally horrifying.
- 20:** Catastrophic - Caster explodes in a shower of gore.

## WEAPONS

- D2:** Fist, kick, headbutt
- D4:** Bone, club, dagger, improvised weapon
- D6:** Mace, short bow, spear, staff
- D8:** Battle axe, long bow, rapier, sword, warhammer
- D10:** Crossbow, two-handed sword

## ARMOR

- Light:** +1 DEF, doublet, helm, leather jacket 10-20gp
- Medium:** +2 DEF, Gambeson, scale, studded leather, chainmail bikini! 50-100gp
- +3 DEF, Brigandine or full chain 100-200gp**
- Heavy:** +4 DEF, Full field plate 1000+gp

## KILL SHOTS

- 1-5:** Agonizing death. Your attack inflicts grim wounds to vital organs. Victim dies in d4 rounds.
- 6-10:** Clean Kill. Your decisive, devastating attack drops your opponent with quiet simplicity.
- 11-15:** Brutal Doom. You overkill your target with force, crushing bone, spraying blood—a real mess.
- 16-19:** Splatter & gore. Your attack renders the victim unrecognizable, smashed to a pulp or hewn in two.
- 20:** Deathbringer. So powerful is your kill, a nearby enemy is also hit. Enemies who view such a kill are terrified and intimidated.

## IMPROVEMENT

1-4xp per session. Level up at 10xp. 100gp=1xp

When you level up, gain an additional Hit Die and a Deathbringer Die.

Once your reach 20+hp, roll new HD with disadvantage. No re-rolls!

Raise any ability score by +1 on levels 3, 5, 7, & 9.

## COMBAT

Rounds are 6 seconds. Group initiative every round: d6, highest roll wins. Ties=simultaneous attack. Players take turns clockwise from the GM.

Everyone must declare actions and Magic Users must declare their spells before initiative is rolled. If the Magic User loses initiative and is successfully attacked, the spell fails.

PCs can move up to 20 feet and attack in one round.

No bonus actions.

Stunts: maneuvers such as pushing, disarming, tripping, blinding, etc. The GM rules whether the stunt is possible and if the player has advantage, disadvantage, or makes a clean roll. If the roll succeeds, the stunt is successful.

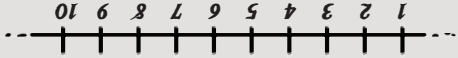
0 HP is unconscious. Negative HP=DEAD.

## SPELLS

Use any OSR or 5e spells you like—but the PCs must find them through exploration.

DC 10 to cast. Saving throws are 15.

## CORRUPTION



Gain +1 when you commit and evil deed or roll Nat 1 when spellcasting. At 10 Corruption you have lost all humanity and become a monster controlled by the GM.

## HEALING

Use a D6 to stitch up wounds after combat.

Heal HP = CON every day of complete bedrest.

## CONVERTING SPELLS & MONSTERS

Import and monsters and spells you like from 5e/OSR games. Monsters have pure HD (no CON bonuses). Spells do the same damage.

Magic items are virtually non-existent. Potions are rare.

## BASICS & ABILITIES

# DEATHBRINGER

Start out with 8 "build points." Distribute these as bonuses between your six Ability Scores, with no higher than +6 in any one Ability Score. Ability Scores range from 0 to +10.

Ex: STR +5, DEX +2, CON +1, INT 0, WIS 0, CHA +1

**Strength:** Add to melee weapon attacks AND damage

**Dexterity:** Add to DEF, missile attacks AND damage, stealth, climbing, lockpicking, acrobatics, etc.

**Constitution:** Saves v. poison, you can carry items = CON + 10, for each day of rest you regain HP=CON. Note: CON does NOT add to HP

**Intelligence:** Add to spellcasting rolls, history, knowledge, +1 indicates literacy

**Wisdom:** Add to mind-based Saving Throws, searching, perception & tracking

**Charisma:** Add to all reaction checks, charm, deception, intimidation, performance, persuasion.

Your Ability Score IS your proficiency bonus, skill level, and natural ability. A +1 STR means you are proficient with ALL hand weapons. A +1 DEX means you are proficient with all ranged weapons, acrobatics, climbing, stealth, etc.

HP = "Pure" Hit Dice, do not add CON

DEFense= 10+ DEX + Armor. (DEF replaces AC)

All characters are human. No one can see in the dark. No clerics. The gods of Deathbringer are indifferent. Spellcasters have been hunted to near-extinction.

Start with d6gp, a waterskin, and d4 days' rations.

## **CHARACTER CLASSES**

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### **DEATHBRINGER**

Hit Dice: d10. Use any armor or weapons.  
Spend a Deathbringer Die to make one extra attack.  
Second attack at 5 th level.  
To start: doublet, shield, 2 weapons

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### **GRIMSCRIBE**

Hit Dice= d6. Cannot wear armor.  
No spell slots. Roll to cast, DC 10. On a roll of Natural 1 gain 1 Corruption and roll on the Miscast Table. Gains spells by finding scrolls, spell books, or by having a friendly higher-level magic user teach them to you. You are a living grimoire, must tattoo all spells on your skin.  
To Start: four cantrips, two first-level spells, dagger

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### **SCOUNDREL**

Hit Dice= d8. Light armor only.  
Advantage when attempting stealth, climbing, listening, lockpicking, searching, etc. +4 to hit and double damage from behind.  
To Start: leather jacket, club or dagger, thieves' tools, rope grappling hook, lucky charm.

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### **WITCH HUNTER**

Hit Dice= d8. Light armor.  
Cast Detect Evil and Protection from Evil 1x per day; Turn Undead at will.  
To Start: leather coat, club, crossbow, holy symbol, 6 torches.

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### **PLAGUE DOCTOR**

Hit Dice= d6. Leather armor only.  
Cure Wounds once per patient per day, Cure Disease & Cure Poison 1x per day. Create d4 potions a day (1) acid splash (2) sleep (3) poison spray (4) bomb [d10] (5) healing [d6] (6) hallucinations  
To Start: Leather beak mask and coat, meat cleaver, medical kit, very suspicious diploma

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Hit Dice: d10. Use any armor or weapons.  
Spend a Deathbringer Die to make one extra attack.  
Second attack at 5 th level.  
To start: doublet, shield, 2 weapons

Hit Dice= d6. Cannot wear armor.  
No spell slots. Roll to cast, DC 10. On a roll of Natural 1 gain 1 Corruption and roll on the Miscast Table. Gains spells by finding scrolls, spell books, or by having a friendly higher-level magic user teach them to you. You are a living grimoire, must tattoo all spells on your skin.  
To Start: four cantrips, two first-level spells, dagger

Hit Dice= d8. Light armor only.  
 Advantage when attempting stealth, climbing, listening, lockpicking, searching, etc. +4 to hit and double damage from behind.  
 To Start: leather jacket, club or dagger, thieves' tools, rope, grappling hook, lucky charm.

Hit Dice= d8. Light armor.  
Cast Detect Evil and Protection from Evil 1x per day; Turn Undead at will.  
To Start: leather coat, club, crossbow, holy symbol, 6 torches.

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& Cure Poison 1x per day. Create d4 potions a day (1)  
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healing [d6] (6) hallucinations  
To Start: Leather beak mask and coat, meat cleaver,  
medical kit, very suspicious diploma

## ***THIS IS HOW WE ROLL***

Advantage & disadvantage for cover, low visibility, having the proper tools, etc.

Natural 20 means +d12 damage and you lower the opponent's DEF by 1.

Natural 1 is a critical failure. Quiver is empty, you are disarmed, or Critical Miscast.

## ***DEATHBRINGER DICE***

Replace class features, Skills, Feats & Inspiration with Deathbringer Dice.

Begin each session with DD equal to your level.

A player can "spend" DDs to:

- (1) Add d6 to any d20 roll.
- (2) Inflict an additional d6 damage on a successful hit.
- (3) Absorb d6 damage.

You may use multiple DD at the same time.

DD cannot be used to alter a Nat 1 or used for initiative rolls. They are not replenished with rest but respawn at the start of a session.

Store up to 10 DD on your sheet in these slots:

### ***BACKGROUND***

- 1 Bounty Hunter
- 2 Courtesan
- 3 Duelist
- 4 Executioner
- 5 Farmer
- 6 Grave Robber
- 7 Leech Collector
- 8 Mercenary
- 9 Minor Noble
- 10 Outlaw
- 11 Performer
- 12 Pit Fighter
- 13 Pirate/Sailor
- 14 Priest/nun/monk
- 15 Rat Catcher
- 16 Servant
- 17 Student/Scholar
- 18 Swineherd
- 19 Soldier
- 20 Urchin

### ***RANDOM MISERY***

- 1 Abandoned at birth.
- 2 Banished from home.
- 3 Betrayed by a loved one.
- 4 Cursed by vengeful witch.
- 5 Disinherited or disowned.
- 6 Escaped bondage or prison.
- 7 Fleed a scandal.
- 8 Framed for a crime.
- 9 Killed someone important.
- 10 Left for dead.
- 11 Locusts ate your crops.
- 12 Owe someone money.
- 13 Pursued by the law.
- 14 Raised in the streets
- 15 Reduced to poverty.
- 16 Rejected by society.
- 17 Ruined by vice.
- 18 Suffering from amnesia.
- 19 Survived a massacre.
- 20 Town ravaged by plague.

Natural 20 means +d12 damage and you lower the opponent's DEF by 1.

## DEATHBRINGER DICE

Begin each session with DD equal to your level.

You may use multiple DD at the same time.  
DD cannot be used to alter a Nat 1 or used for initiative rolls. They are not replenished with rest but respawn at the start of a session.

Store up to 10 DD on your sheet in these slots:

1 Bounty Hunter	1 Abandoned at birth.
2 Courtesan	2 Banished from home.
3 Duelist	3 Betrayed by a loved one.
4 Executioner	4 Cursed by vengeful witch.
5 Farmer	5 Disinherited or disowned.
6 Grave Robber	6 Escaped bondage or prison.
7 Leech Collector	7 Fled a scandal.
8 Mercenary	8 Framed for a crime.
9 Minor Noble	9 Killed someone important.
10 Outlaw	10 Left for dead.
11 Performer	11 Locusts ate your crops.
12 Pit Fighter	12 Owe someone money.
13 Pirate/Sailor	13 Pursued by the law.
14 Priest/nun/monk	14 Raised in the streets
15 Rat Catcher	15 Reduced to poverty.
16 Servant	16 Rejected by society.
17 Student/Scholar	17 Ruined by vice.
18 Swineherd	18 Suffering from amnesia.
19 Soldier	19 Survived a massacre.
20 Urchin	20 Town ravaged by plague.

STR

DEX

CON

INT

WIS

CHA

**PLAYER NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CHARACTER NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CLASS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**LEVEL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **XP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DEFENSE**  


**HIT POINTS**  

**MAX**  


**CURRENT**  


**DEATHBRINGER DICE**

**WEAPONS**

**ARMOR**

**EQUIPMENT**

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**CORRUPTION**  

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# DEATHBRINGER

PLAYER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CHARACTER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_ XP: \_\_\_\_\_

DEFENSE HIT POINTS



MAX

CURRENT

DEATHBRINGER DICE


WEAPONS

ARMOR

EQUIPMENT

STR	Melee Attack
DEX	Damage
CON	Lift/Bend/Carry
INT	Ranged Attack
WIS	Defense
CHA	Stealth
	Hit Points
	Save v. poison, heat, & cold
	Cast Spells
	Knowledge
	Read & write
	Perception
	Searching
	Save vs. spells
	Charm
	Persuade
	Perform

CORRUPTION

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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SPECIAL ABILITIES

CP	SP	GP
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