

DM HELPER



A DUNGEON MASTER'S HELPING HAND

GETTING STARTED

The DM Helper will act as your in-game assistance, taking care of the administrative tasks and allowing you to focus on your players, the narrative and the fun!

First Steps

This tutorial will guide you through creating your first campaign (in this case the example campaign), using the interface and setting up your world to run your game in.

Download and install

Get the latest copy of the DM Helper from our [itch.io](#) page.

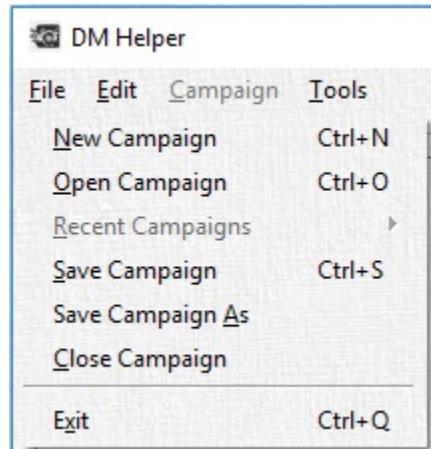
Unpack the archive to an destination of your choosing. Keep in mind that you might want to put some files (like maps and character portraits) in the same location. If kept in different folders, it is a little bit less likely to accidentally delete some files of your campaign if you do an update.

- [MyCampaigns]
 - [DMHelper]
 - [Campaign ONE]
 - CampaignOne.xml
 - [Portraits]
 - Ingrimmdir.jpg
 - Yariza.jpg
 - [Maps]
 - HowlingCaves.jpg
 - ColdMountain.jpg
 - SomeObscureVillage.jpg

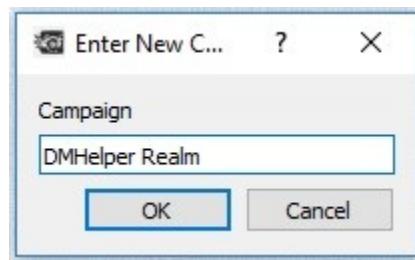
There are no more installation steps neccessary. Just start DMHelper.exe

Empty campaign

First of all, a new campaign has to be created or opened. Hit *File* to see your options.



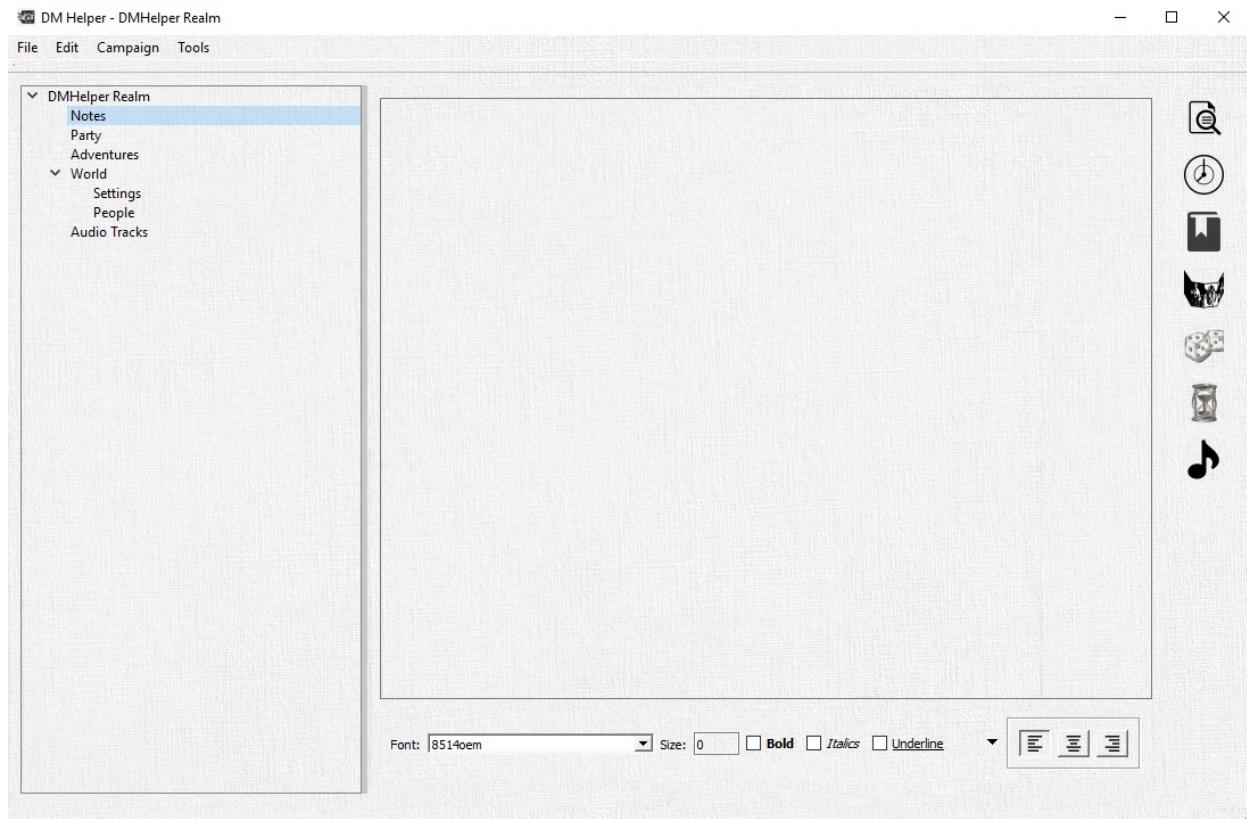
If there is no recent campaign to open, the options are opening the example campaign, or creating a new one. Just hit *New Campaign* or *Ctrl+N* to open a dialog for creation. There the name of the new campaign can be set. I'll use *DMHelper Realm* for this example.



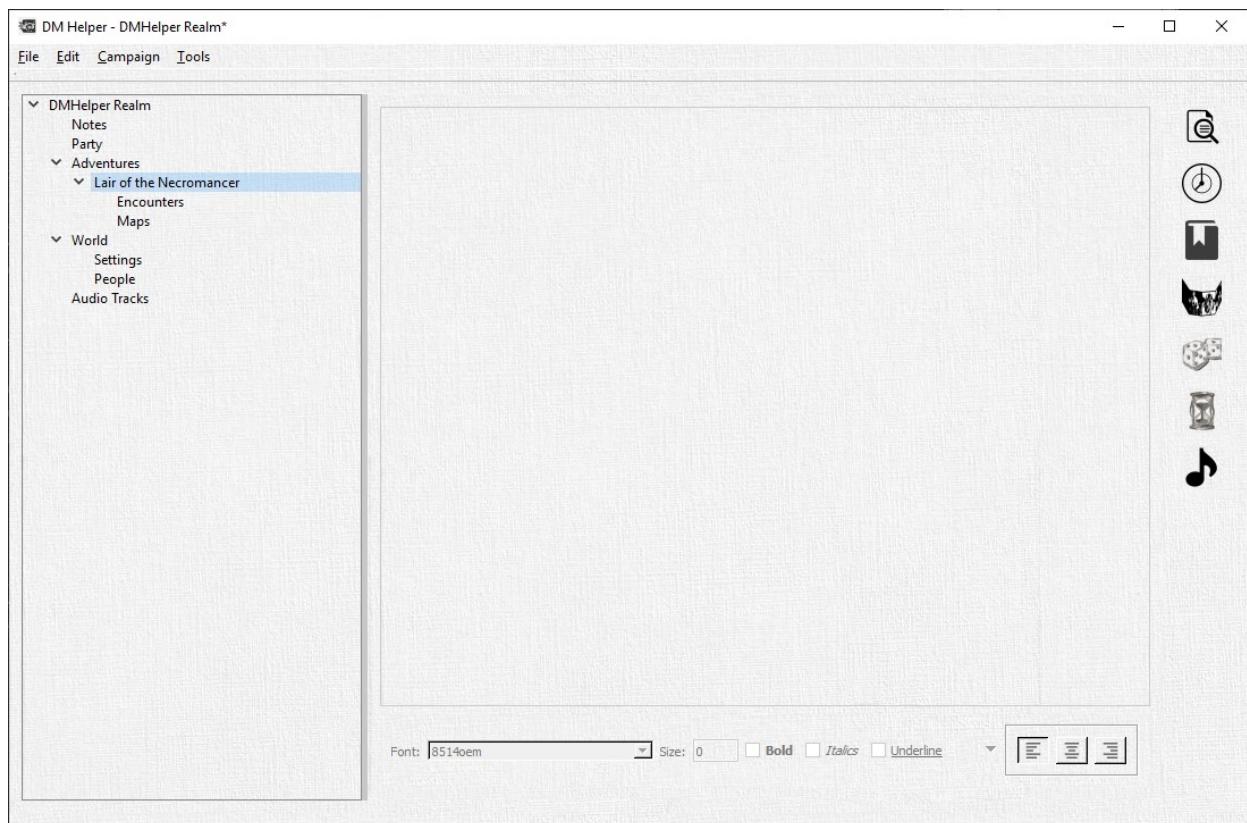
Hit okay, then the DM Helper interface will be active and we can start adding our first content. This is a good moment to save your file in a location where it is safe.

Creating the first Content

Now the DM Helper should show you an empty campaign, with several categories where you could add your content.

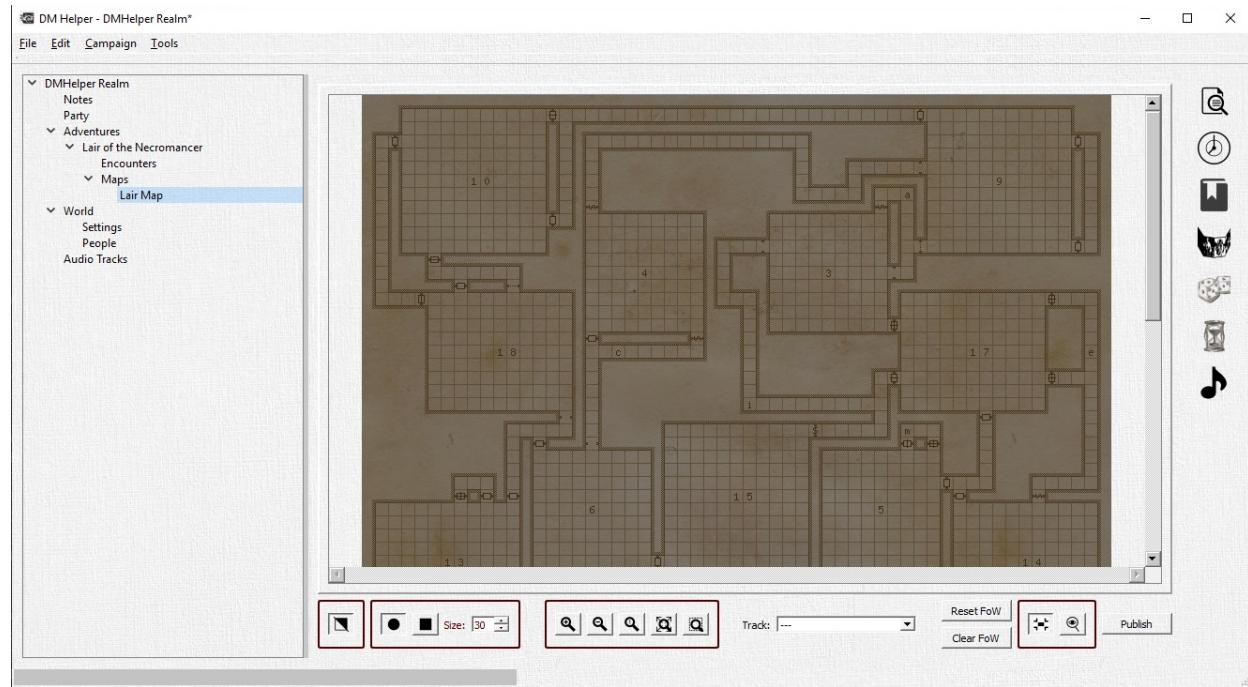


First, we'll create an *Adventure*. Let's call it **Lair of the Necromancer**. Right click on Adventures and select *Add Adventure*. A new dialog will open and you can enter the name of the adventure. Once a new Adventure is created, there will be more elements under Adventures:

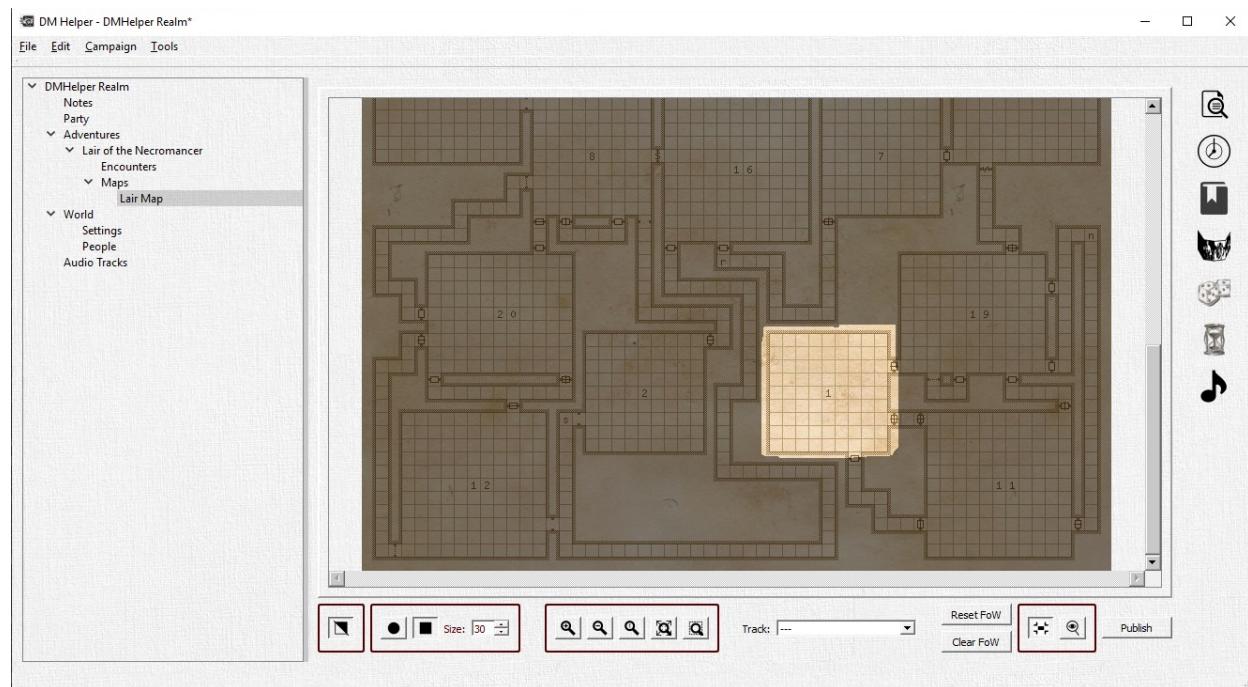


Let's select the newly created Adventure and add a Map. To do so, right click on Maps and then *Add Map*. First, it has to be named, so fill in *Lair Map*. Once you hit ok, a file selection dialogue will pop up, where you can navigate to the map you want to use for

the lair. Let's find *LairoftheNecromancer.jpg* and add it.



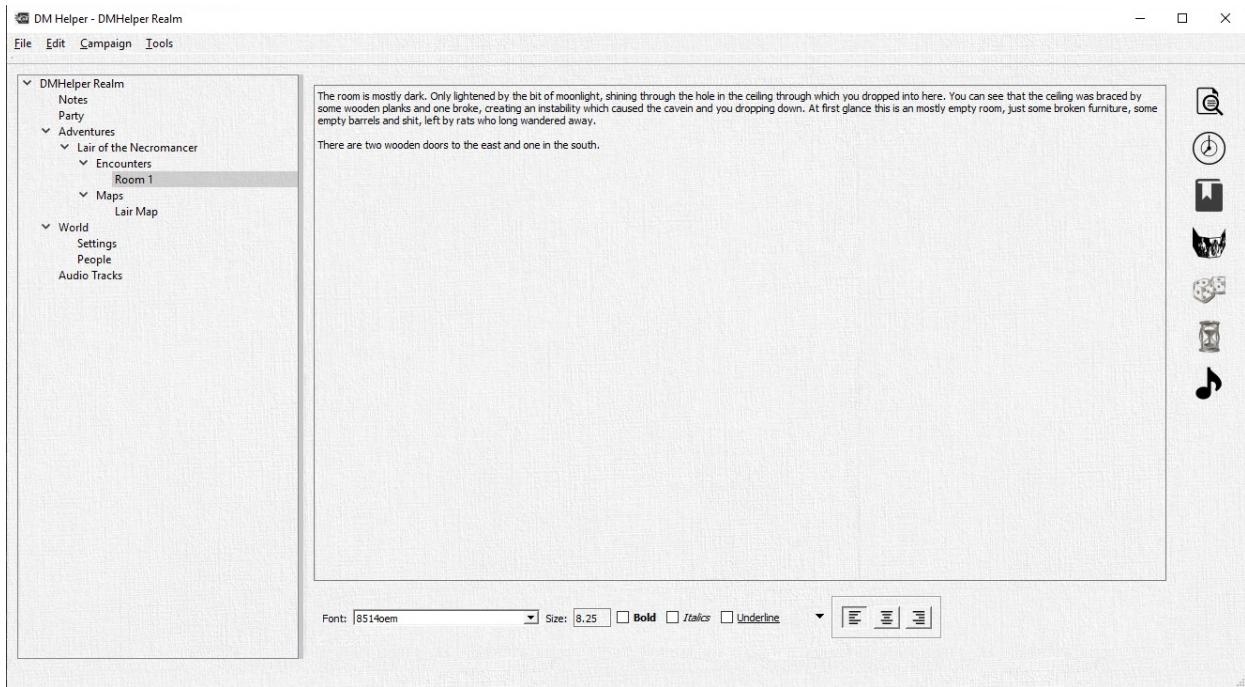
So, I just assume the players dropped to a trapdoor in room 1 of this lair, while investigating the cemetery to find why some of the graves are suddenly open and empty. Notice that the map is slightly darker than your original file. That's the fog of war, which you now can remove for room one by just painting over the area. Button 1 selects if fog is removed or added to the map. The controls in 2 can be used to modify your brush size and style.



The controls in 3 are used to change the view of the map. That comes in handy if you have really large maps and could not make out the details fully zoomed out. Just try them, you will not mess up your map by zooming.

I like to keep my room descriptions also in the DM Helper. For that we're going to create an encounter by right clicking on *Encounters->Add Text Encounter*. I will name it *Room*

1 and put in my description.

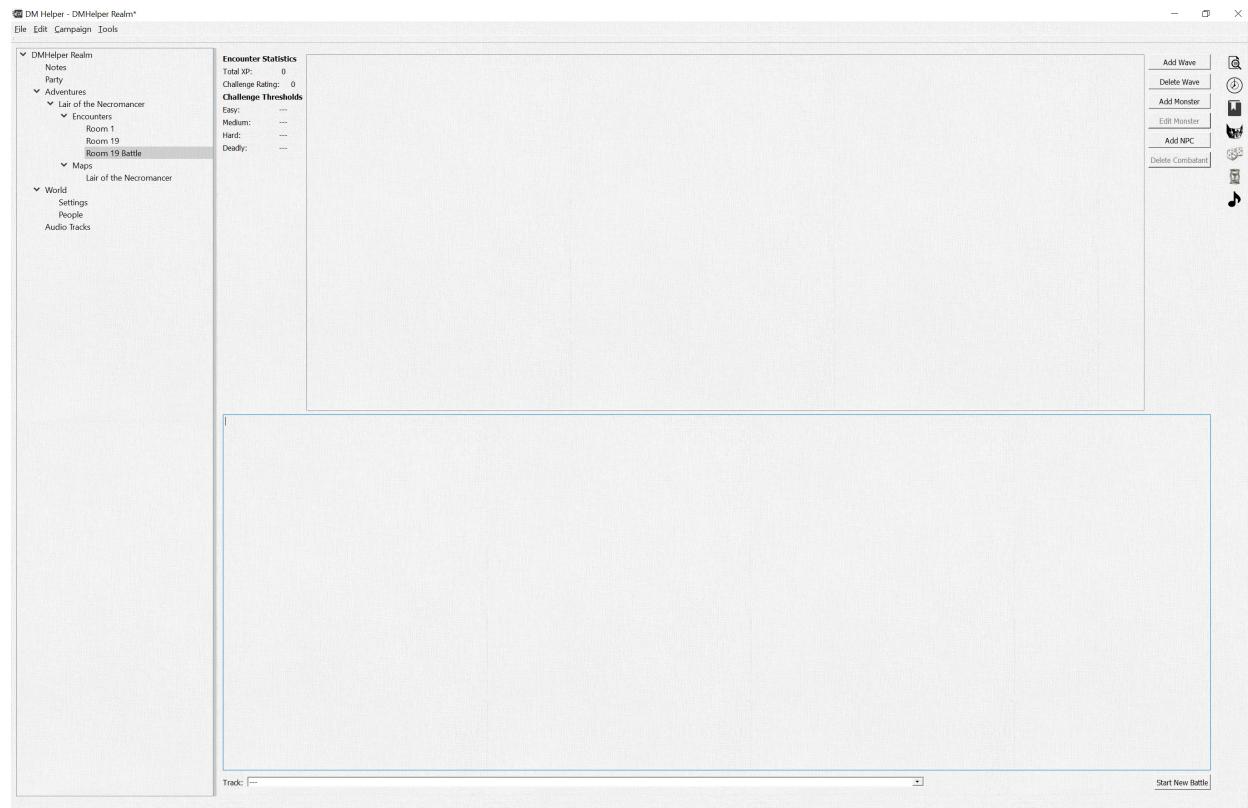


This way, I can just read the players the descriptions right out of the DM Helper.

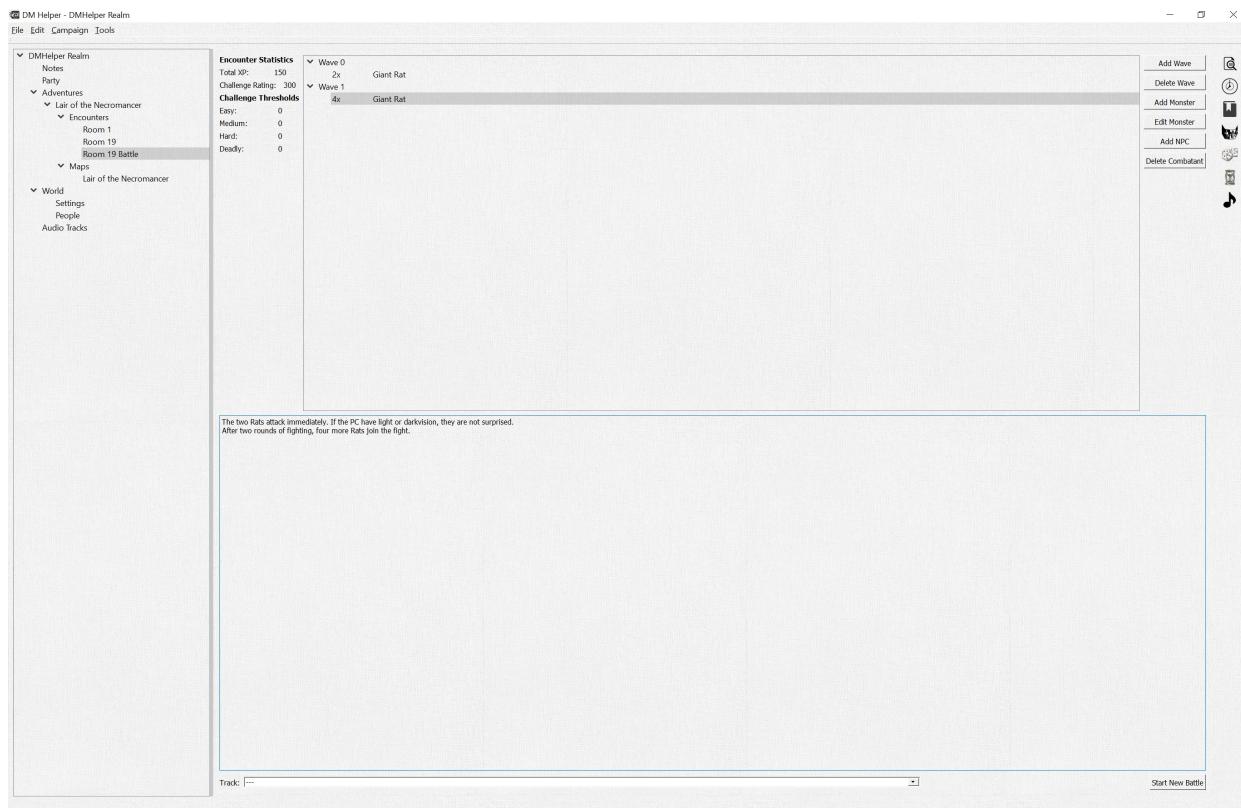
Now I assume that my players will go next to room 19. First I'll create a text encounter with the description. *The old, wooden door opens to your pushing it, the hinges creaking loudly. After a few inches the door gets stuck, just wide enough opened for you and your companions to push through, one by one. The following room is dark. Really dark. The little light spilling over from the room before does not help, even a little*

If the players have a torch or darkvision: The room is mostly empty. Here and there are some little clusters of rubble. The door got stuck on a rock, embedded in the muddy ground. On the other corner of the room, there are two, halfling sized holes, right next to each other. (perception check) You think you saw a reflection off an eye. Just before two large rats emerge from the holes.

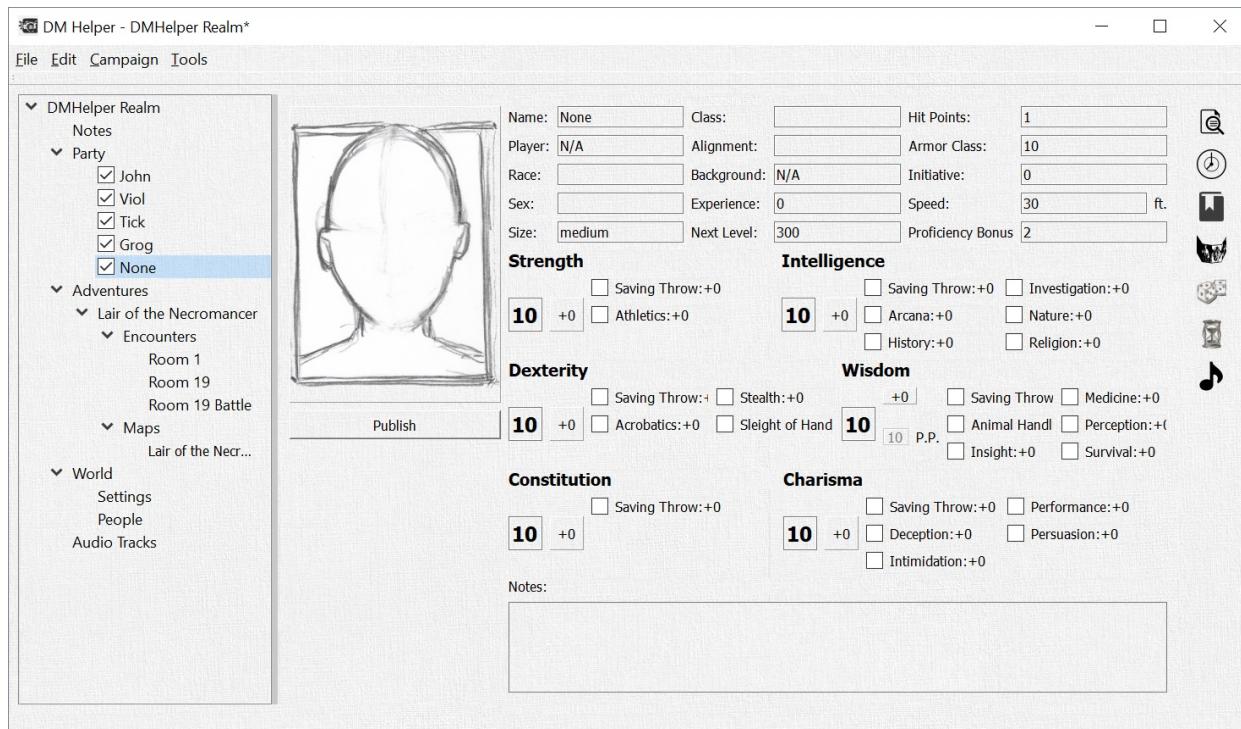
Now, there will be a fight, so by *right-click->add battle encounter*, I'll add a battle.



First, I want to add a wave with *Add Wave*. Then I add two Giant Rats by clicking on *Add Monster*. A new dialog comes up where I can select the Monster, how many and even override some stats right there. I just stick to two basic Giant Rats though. Then, since there is *always* more than one rat, I add another wave with four Giant Rats. Also, in the lower text field, I'll add a short description. *The two Rats attack immediately. If the PC have light or darkvision, they are not surprised. After two rounds of fighting, four more Rats join the fight.* After that the encounter should look something like that:



Next, I'll need someone to kill ... ahem create a challenge for. Lets add some player characters by *right-click* on *Party->Add Character*. I'll name them John, Viol, Tick and Grog. Whole character sheets can be stored here, particularly the Image is interesting. It does not have to be an portrait or something like that, just a single character. So, lets do that next. *Left-Click* on the portrait icon opens a file selection dialogue, where the image can be selected:



After that, the picture will be shown in the character dialogue and on the battle map.

The screenshot shows the DM Helper - DMHelper Realm application. On the left, there's a sidebar with a tree view:

- DMHelper Realm** (selected)
- Notes**
- Party**
 - John
 - Viol
 - Tick
 - Grog
- Adventures**
 - Lair of the Necromancer
 - Encounters
 - Room 1
 - Room 19
 - Room 19 Battle
 - Maps
 - Lair of the Necr...
- World**
 - Settings
 - People
 - Audio Tracks

In the center, there's a large text field containing the letter 'J'. Below it is a 'Publish' button.

On the right, there are several tabs for character stats:

- Strength**: Value 10, +0, Saving Throw: +0, Athletics: +0
- Intelligence**: Value 10, +0, Saving Throw: +0, Investigation: +0, Arcana: +0, Nature: +0, History: +0, Religion: +0
- Dexterity**: Value 10, +0, Saving Throw: +0, Stealth: +0, Acrobatics: +0, Sleight of Hand: +0
- Wisdom**: Value 10, +0, P.P., Saving Throw: +0, Medicine: +0, Animal Handl: +0, Perception: +0, Insight: +0, Survival: +0
- Constitution**: Value 10, +0, Saving Throw: +0
- Charisma**: Value 10, +0, Saving Throw: +0, Performance: +0, Deception: +0, Persuasion: +0, Intimidation: +0

Below the stats is a 'Notes:' text area with a placeholder box.

Now, my players have entered the room, I read the description to them and the fight begins. I go back to *Lair of the Necromancer->Encounters->Room 19 Battle*. Down on the right, there is a *Start Battle* button, which I click now. A new dialogue opens and first I'll add the Map by clicking on *New Map*

The screenshot shows the DM-Helper Battle View interface. On the left, there's a large empty area for a map. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'New Map...', a grid scale selector (Grid Scale: 25), and X/Y Offset sliders.

In the center, there's a list of combatants and their stats:

Name	Init:	AC:	HP:
J	0	10	1
V	0	10	1
T	0	10	1
G	0	10	1
Giant Rat#1	12	12	9
Giant Rat#2	12	12	8

On the right, there are several controls:

- Countdown:** Set to 0.
- Sort** and **Next** buttons.
- Add Wave**, **Add Monsters**, **Add Character**, **Add NPC** buttons.
- A list of checkboxes for battle settings:
 - Lair Actions
 - Limit Movement
 - Show Compass
 - Show Effects
 - Show Grid
 - Show Living Combatants
 - Show Dead Combatants
- Publish** and **END BATTLE** buttons.
- Hide Battle** button.

Using the *Grid Scale* and *X/Y Offset* the overlay can be adapted to the actual map picture, regardless of scaling. This will be important for measurement effect areas or ranges. You can enter the initiatives and hit *sort* or order the combatants using drag'n'drop.

The screenshot shows the DMHelper Battle View interface. On the left, there is a list of characters and monsters with their details. On the right, there is a sidebar with various controls.

Character List:

- J Init: **12** Name: John AC: 10 HP: **1**
- V Init: **5** Name: Viol AC: 10 HP: **1**
- T Init: **18** Name: Tick AC: 10 HP: **1**
- G Init: **2** Name: Grog AC: 10 HP: **1**

Monster List:

- Giant Rat#1 AC: 12
Init: **12** HP: **6**
- Giant Rat#2 AC: 12
Init: **4** HP: **11**

Sidebar Controls:

- Sort
- Next
- Countdown: **0**
- Add Wave
- Add Monsters
- Add Character
- Add NPC

Checkboxes:

- Lair Actions
- Limit Movement
- Show Compass

The characters and monsters can also be placed on the map by drag'n'drop. By clicking *Publish* a new window will open, which can be moved to a second screen or screen share to be viewed to the players.

The screenshot shows the DMHelper Battle View interface with a battle map. The map features a grid of light brown squares representing terrain, with some darker areas and a circular boundary.

Character and Monster Positions:

- Grog (G) is positioned in the bottom-left corner.
- Viol (V) is positioned below Grog.
- John (J) is positioned in the center-left area.
- Tick (T) is positioned to the right of John.
- Giant Rat#1 is positioned in the upper-middle area.
- Giant Rat#2 is positioned in the lower-middle area.

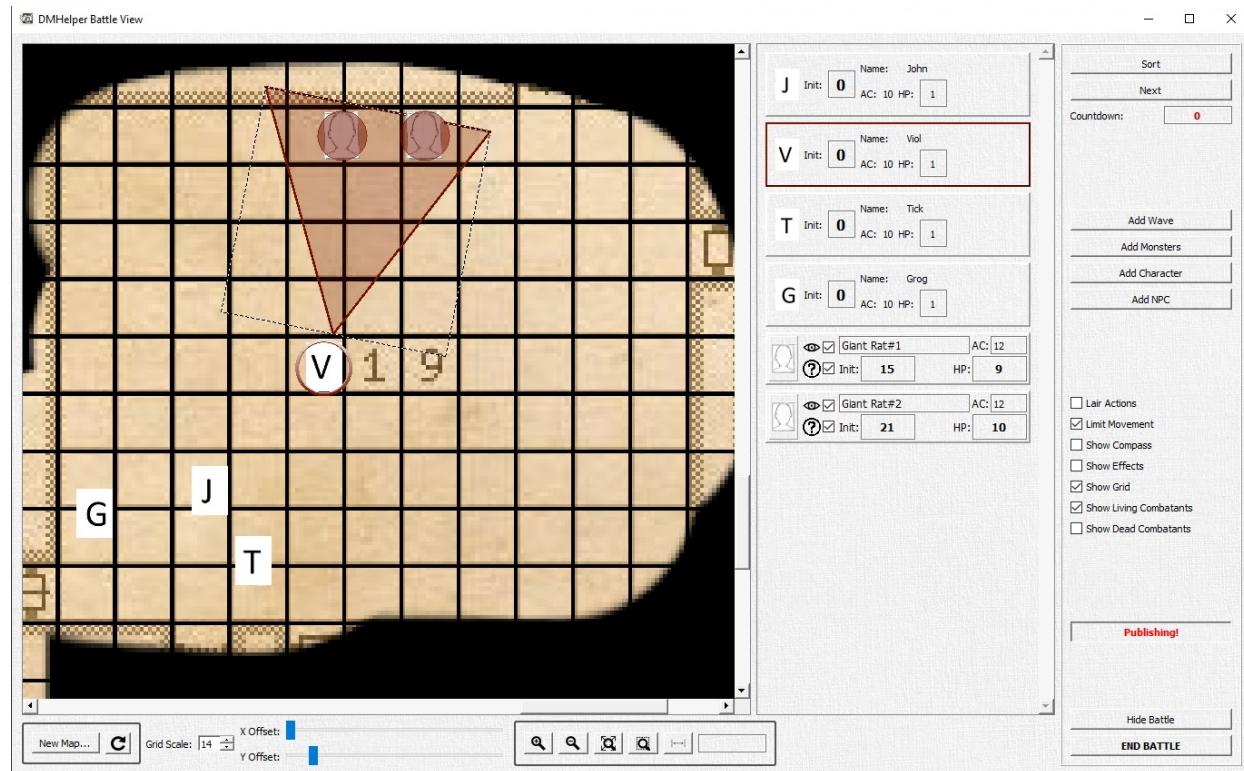
Map Controls:

- New Map...
- Grid Scale: 14
- X Offset: **14**
- Y Offset: **14**
- Search icons: magnifying glass, question mark, etc.

Sidebar Controls:

- Sort
- Next
- Countdown: **0**
- Add Wave
- Add Monsters
- Add Character
- Add NPC
- Lair Actions
- Limit Movement
- Show Compass
- Show Effects
- Show Grid
- Show Living Combatants
- Show Dead Combatants
- Publish
- Hide Battle
- END BATTLE

The player or monster, which turn is up, will be highlighted. Dragging him over the map will show exactly how far he can move, as stated in the character page. Hitting *next* will end its turn and the next in the list will be on its turn.



John did nothing, *Viol* moved and then used a cone shaped spell. I added the effect by right clicking on the background. With a left click it gets dragged, a right click is used to rotate it in place. *Viol* is hitting both rats (red marker) with the spell.

Conclusion

This are the first steps with the DM Helper and should get you started for the first adventure. This firsts steps file covers the base functions of the DM Helper, there is lots more to do. For example: Music Tracks can be played, NPCs can be added and whole campaigns can be planned.

If there are issues, ideas or questions, feel free to get in contact with us.

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Itch.io: <https://dm-helper.itch.io/dm-helper>

DriveThruRPG.com: <https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/274208/DM-Helper>

Contact

You can reach us under the usual channels:

Email: info@dmhelper.net

Twitter: @TheRealDMHelper

Join us on our Discord server here: <https://discord.gg/C7zPKBp>

We are happy for everybody to use the DM Helper for free and are committed to giving to our tool to anybody interested in using it.

If you would like to support us in our efforts to continually improve and expand, you are welcome to do so either through one of the download portals or via our Patreon here: www.patreon.com/dmhelper

References

Many thanks to the following people for allowing us to use their amazing artwork and maps for our documentation! We highly recommend that you check out their work and support them in every way possible!

Background images and character images donated by:

Rixt Heerschop

Artist & Illustrator

www.rixtheerschop.com

Maps donated by:

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https://www.reddit.com/user/Urza_Is_Mine

Rustajb

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Feature Improvements:

Furthermore, thanks to the following community members for their ideas, requests and recommendations to help us make the DM Helper as good as possible!

- Cricketot (<https://www.reddit.com/user/Cricketot>) for the Random Marketplace inspiration and algorithm
- NutritiousCookie for the improvements to the Player's Window (rotation still to come!)
- anomalystic777 for the customizable calendars and reference tables

... and many more for their chats and wise words on Reddit or the other clever corners of the Internet