

# Combat



ou will encounter many different Foes. In some cases, you can avoid confrontation, but often the dungeon denizens resent your intrusion and you have to fight them.

A Foe's level, abbreviated as L, tells you how dangerous it is. The L is the number you must roll to hit the Foe, affect it with a spell or with any other effect.

Defense is more difficult than offense. To Defend from a Foe's attack, you must roll **HIGHER THAN** its L.

**Example:** A goblin is L3. You need a 3+ to hit him and a 4+ to avoid his blows.



## Who Goes First

In an encounter, PCs and Foes act on alternate turns. The turn is a measure of time in which all characters on one side (PCs or Foes) act once. Unless the Foes surprise the party, the PCs go first. Choose one of the two following options:

- 1) Attack the Foes immediately.
- 2) Wait to see what the Foes will do. Roll for their Reaction (see below). If their Reaction is an attack (e.g., a Fight or Fight to the death Reaction, or a Bribe you can't/won't pay), the Foes attack **BEFORE** the party.

**You decide in which order your PCs act.** Don't randomize it: it's a crucial tactical decision.

## Surprise

Certain Foes might surprise the party because they are hidden in shadows, camouflaged, invisible, or have quicker reflexes. This is indicated as a X-in-6 chance. If surprise happens, the Foes act before the PCs. Roll for their Reactions to determine what they will do.

**Example:** The party steps into a room where cave goblins hide in the shadows. The goblins have a 2-in-6 chance of surprise. Roll d6. On a 1-2, the goblins act before the party. On a 3-6, the PCs spot the goblins and act first.



## Ranged Attacks and Initiative

PCs with ready ranged weapons and spells can use them before Foes have a chance to react. Even if Foes sneak up on you, it takes a fraction of a second to loose a nocked arrow or to cast a spell. Ranged attacks and spells always strike first.

**Example:** *The party steps into a cavern where 5 cave goblins are hiding. The cave goblins have a 2-in-6 chance of surprise. You roll a 1, so the goblins surprise the party. However, the party's wizard has a Fireball ready, and the elf has her bow in her hands. You decide to roll first with the elf, and her arrow takes down 1 goblin. The wizard casts his Fireball, and slays 2 more goblins. The two surviving goblins now attack the party, since the other PCs did not have any ranged weapons or spells ready.*

If Foes surprise the party, the Foes' ranged attacks are resolved BEFORE the party's ranged attacks. Order of actions is:

- 1) Foes perform ranged attacks, if any.
- 2) PCs perform ranged attacks and cast spells. Thrown vials (e.g., holy water) may be used in this phase.
- 3) Foes attack in melee.
- 4) PCs attack in melee.

Your PCs attack in whichever order you prefer. You declare an attack with a PC AFTER seeing the result of another PC's attack. Use the Initiative Flow-chart in the Tables section.

**Example:** *The party is facing zombies. The wizard waits for the barbarian to loose his bow before deciding to throw a vial of holy water or use a fireball. If the barbarian's attack destroys all the zombies, there's no need for the wizard to waste holy water or a spell.*

## Attacking Foes

A PC's attack is represented by a die roll called an Attack roll. Roll a die and add the attacker's modifiers, if any. Warriors, elves, dwarves, paladins, barbarians add +L to their Attack rolls.

**Example:** *Shaeta, L3 barbarian, rolls  $d6+3$  when she attacks. When she levels up and becomes L4, her Attack roll will be  $d6+4$ .*

Classes with partial martial training add  $+1/2L$ , rounded down.

**Example:** *Tortus, a L3 cleric, rolls  $d6+1$  when he attacks.*

Some classes have martial training only against specific Foes.

**Example:** *Clerics are trained to fight undead and add +L when attacking them. When Tortus the L3 cleric attacks a zombie, he rolls  $d6+3$ .*

# Combat

Wizards add +L to spellcasting rolls, but never to melee Attack rolls. When they cast a spell, such as a Lightning or a Fireball, they add +L. Wizards can use only light weapons (daggers, sticks, clubs, knives, slings; -1 to Attack rolls).

**Example:** Flauros, a L4 wizard, rolls d6-1 when attacking with his dagger. He doesn't add any L bonus and his light weapon has a -1 modifier.

Even with a negative modifier, a PC may still roll an explosive result, so even a weak wizard will score a "lucky hit" now and then.

**Example:** Flauros attacks and rolls a 6. This is an explosive result, so he rolls another d6 and adds to it. The second d6 rolls a 4, so Flauros' attack total is:  $6+4=10$ , -1 for a light weapon = 9.

Rogues are good at avoiding attacks. They add +L to their Defense rolls, but have no Attack bonus. They add +L to Attack only when attacking an outnumbered Minor Foe. This represents their ability to sneak at the back of Foes. This works only when the Minor Foe is outnumbered (e.g., there are 3 Foes and 4 PCs, including the rogue).

**Example:** The party is facing 5 goblins. Shilsa, a L4 rogue, attacks one of the goblins. There are 4 PCs in the party, so the goblin is NOT outnumbered and Shilsa enjoys no bonus. She roll d6, at -1 for using a Light Weapon. One turn later, there are 3 goblins left. Now the party outnumbers the goblins. When Shilsa attacks, now she adds +L. While her team-mates engage the Foes, she sneaks behind a goblin and slips cold steel through his ribs!

Attack rolls are modified by weapon type. See the weapon's description for details..

**Example:** Shaeta, L3 barbarian, armed with a two-handed sword, rolls d6 +3 (her L bonus) +1 (two-handed weapon bonus), for a total of d6+4.

Some weapons have bonuses vs. specific Foes.

**Example:** Gravus, L4 cleric, attacks a skeleton, using a two-handed mace (a crushing weapon, +1 for being two-handed). He rolls d6, +4 for L4 (clerics add +L when attacking undead), +1 for a two-handed weapon, +1 for using a crushing weapon against a skeleton, for a total of d6+6.

**Example 2:** A L4 warrior with a sword (hand weapon) rolls d6+4 (his L). The sword adds no bonus.

**Example 3:** A wizard with a dagger (light weapon) rolls d6 -1. No level bonus is added.

## Unarmed Fighting

Weapons might be stolen or destroyed. It takes 1 turn to draw another weapon (if you have one). Unarmed PCs have -2 on Attack rolls.



## Fighting in Darkness

If a party loses its source of light (lantern, torch, or the like), all PCs will be at -2 on their Attack, Defense and Saves, may not use ranged weapons or perform Search rolls.

*Exception: PCs who see well in the dark ignore this modifier. See the class descriptions for details.*

## Crushing or Slashing Weapons

Weapons deal crushing or slashing damage. Crushing weapons are blunt trauma weapons. Examples:

**Crushing light hand weapons:** Club, staff, cudgel, shillelagh, jo stick, nunchaku, walking stick, wizard's staff.

**Crushing hand weapons:** Metal rod, mace, hammer, heavy club.

**Crushing two handed weapons:** Maul, war-hammer, warclub, quarterstaff.

**Crushing ranged weapons:** Throwing stick, sling.

Slashing weapons are bladed or pointed and inflict damage by cutting and puncturing. They may be envenomed. Some examples:

**Slashing light hand weapons:** Dagger, knife, short sword.

**Slashing hand weapons:** Sword, axe, rapier, sabre, spear.

**Slashing two handed weapons:** Pike, long spear, two handed sword, halberd, naginata, glaive.

**Slashing ranged weapons:** Bow, crossbow, javelin, firearms.



# Combat

A PC may carry more than one weapon. During combat, a PC must spend 1 turn to exchange weapons. Note your default weapon on the PC's profile. That's the weapon the PC will be wielding when an encounter happens.

## Damage

Damage is the amount of Life a PC or Foe loses when an attack hits. This is normally 1. Foes with no damage indication on their profiles inflict 1 damage. Foes with multiple attacks inflict 1 damage with every attack. Complex Foes have a detailed description of their attacks and how much damage each inflicts, such as: "2 attacks, 1 bite (2 damage) and 1 claw strike (1 damage)."

## Foes

Foes are divided into two classes: Major and Minor.

**Minor Foes** include Vermin and Minions. They have only 1 Life each and are encountered in groups. Defeating them gives 1 XP every 10 encounters. A successful Attack roll will kill 1 or more Minor Foes. If an Attack roll is multiple times the Level of the Minor Foe, the attack slays 1 Minor Foe per each multiple.

*Example: A warrior attacks a band of L3 goblins. His Attack roll total is 9. 3 goblins are slain (the warrior rolled three times the L of the goblins). In other words, take the total rolled, divide it by the L of the Minor Foes, round down; the result is the number of Minor Foes slain.*

*Another way to see it: the total of the Attack roll is the "damage" inflicted by the attack. The Level of the Minor Foes is the "hit points" of each creature.*

**Minor Foes and Morale:** When a group of Minor Foes is reduced under half its initial number (e.g., 5 creatures reduced to 2), check the remaining Foes' Morale. Roll 1d6 for the whole group. On a 1-3, they run away. On a 4+, they keep on fighting. You roll Morale only once per encounter, unless the description says otherwise. Cowardly or courageous Foes have a Morale modifier, such as a +1 or -1. Foes rolling a Fight to the Death Reaction, or whose description says "Morale: Never", never test Morale and always fight to the bitter end.

**Major Foes** (Weird Monsters and Bosses) have many Life points like PCs. Some perform many attacks per turn. Every Attack roll that hits a Major Foe inflicts 1 damage, or more if the Attack roll goes multiple times over the Foe's Level.

*Example: A barbarian attacks a L4 ogre and rolls a total of 9. Since this goes twice over the Ogre's L, the attack inflicts 2 damage.*

**When a Major Foe loses more than 1/2 Life, immediately reduce its Level by 1.** It becomes easier to hit that Foe and to defend against its attacks, as its wounds are slowing it down. Foes ignore this rule if their description says so.



## Fleeing Foes



Fleeing Foes disappear and you get their Treasure. In the case of a group of Minor Foes, the loot was carried by the ones you killed. In the case of a Major Foe, the room is its lair and the Treasure is strewn across the floor.

If you want to kill fleeing Foes (maybe you need body parts as alchemical ingredients), all PCs may perform one last Attack at +1 or cast a spell as the Foes flee. In a corridor, only PCs in position 1 and 2, or using spells or ranged weapons, can attack them.

## Marching Order

PCs are arranged in a Marching Order with 4 positions (or more, if there are additional characters, animal companions or NPCs). This determines who is hit by a Trap or other effect ("a stone drops on the PC in position 3 of the Marching Order") and who can attack/be attacked in corridors. You may rearrange positions before entering a tile. Use miniatures or counters to represent this, or write the position number next to the PC's name on the play sheet.

**Marching Order in corridors:** In corridors, 2 PCs walk abreast, so a party of 4 will have 2 PCs in the front (positions 1 and 2) and 2 PCs in the rear (positions 3 and 4). A party of 3 will have 2 PCs in the front (positions 1 and 2) and one in the rear (position 3). If the party is reduced to 2, they are in the front, but are attacked in the rear if surprised by Wandering Monsters. In a corridor, only PCs in positions 1 and 2 can fight in melee. PCs in positions 3 and 4 can use spells or ranged attacks over the heads of their allies.

**Narrow corridors:** Some adventures feature narrow corridors where the Marching Order is restricted to only 1 PC in the front. In narrow corridors, two handed weapons attack at a final modifier of -1 and light weapons have no modifier.

## Assigning Attacks

**In rooms:** Marching Order is irrelevant in a room or open area. Rooms are large enough that all PCs can fight in melee. Ranged weapons may be used only for one turn. After that, the PCs with ranged weapons will be engaged in close combat. In close combat, all PCs are assumed to draw close combat weapons or, if they have none, fight at -2 (unarmed combat modifier). Spells may be cast as normal in rooms.

When the party attacks, assign attacks as you see fit. Wait to see the effect of an attack before rolling your next attack. All PCs can attack.

**In corridors:** Only PCs in positions 1 and 2 can attack in melee. PCs in position 3 and 4 can use only ranged weapons and spells, and may continue



# Combat

to do so throughout the encounter until they are contacted in melee (this happens if PCs in positions 1 and 2 teleport away or are killed). If contacted in melee, PCs in positions 3 and 4 they can still cast spells, or spend 1 turn to draw a melee weapon.

**Wandering Monsters in Corridors:** If the party is ambushed in a corridor (see Wandering Monsters, below), the attack comes from the rear. Only PCs in position 3 and 4 can fight. PCs in positions 1 and 2 become the rear of the party and can use only spells and ranged weapons. Remember that switching to a different weapon takes 1 turn.

## When Do Foes Attack?

After all PCs have performed one action each (e.g., attacking, casting a spell, healing, switching weapons), it's the Foes' turn to attack — if any have survived. **FOES DO NOT ROLL DICE.** PCs make a Defense roll against the L of the Foes, modified by armor, shield, and by the PC's L in the case of rogues.

Main Defense Roll Modifiers include:

Wearing Light armor +1

Wearing Heavy Armor +2

Carrying a Shield +1

If rogue: add the rogue's L

Dwarf defending vs. troll or giant +1

Halfling defending vs. troll, giant, or ogre: +L



**A Defense roll of 1 is always a failure, no matter your modifiers.** A roll of 6 is not an automatic success, but it's an Explosion: roll another d6 and add it to the total.

Certain attacks negate the bonus from armor or shield. Surprise attacks from Wandering Monsters negate the bonus from shields on the first turn of combat.

## Effect of Failed Defense rolls

A PC failing a Defense roll takes 1 damage (or more, see the description of the Foe). Any special ability connected with the attack (e.g., a poisonous bite) is triggered by the failed Defense.

## Effect of Successful Defense roll

The PC avoids the attack and takes no damage.





# Combat

## Assigning Enemy Attacks

To determine which PCs are attacked by Foes, consider:

- 1) Number of Foes;
- 2) Marching Order;
- 3) Whether you are in a room or a corridor.

In a room with fewer Foes than PCs: Each Foe **MUST** attack a different PC. Marching Order is ignored. If there are not enough Foes to attack all of the PCs, you decide who is not attacked.

**Example:** 3 goblins fight 2 warriors, 1 wizard, and 1 cleric. The player decides that the goblins attack the warriors and the cleric. The wizard hides behind his allies and is not attacked.

In a room with as many Foes as PCs: Each PC receives one attack.

In a room with more Foes than PCs: Each PC receives an equal number of attacks, and you decide who receives any outstanding extra attacks. Exception: Foes who **HATE** one character class (this is shown in their description) always perform outstanding attacks on that class. Trolls, goblins, and kobolds hate dwarves; orcs hate elves; undead hate clerics.

In a corridor: TWO Foes, maximum, attack the PCs in positions 1 and 2.

A single PC in a corridor will be attacked by two Foes.

Dragon breath will hit all PCs in a tile. In general, "area attacks" require everyone in the party to make a Defense roll or a Save.

Wandering Monsters encountered in a corridor will sneak upon the party. Up to 2 Wandering Monsters will attack PCs in positions 3 and 4.

## Running Away From Combat

If you want to run away from a melee, you have two options: Withdraw or Flee.

**Withdraw:** The party retreats to any tile at its back, slamming the door shut and leaving the Foes on the other side. Write down where the Foes are. They will still be there if you return to that tile later! Withdrawing is possible only if there's a door you can slam shut between the PCs and the Foes. If the room has an opening, it is not possible.

During a withdrawal, each Foe gets to strike **ONCE** at a PC.

PCs have +1 on their Defense rolls and can use their shields.

You may withdraw **ONLY** towards a tile you already visited. Roll a 1-in-6 chance of Wandering Monsters as you do so.



# Combat

**Flee:** The party runs away. As they do so, each Foe attacks once. If there are enough Foes to attack all PCs, every PC receives one attack. If there are fewer Foes than PCs, target first the PCs who have lost more Life points, then hated PCs. If none of the above apply, randomize the attacks.

Gear and Treasure of PCs slain while fleeing remain in the tile and may not be redistributed to allies. Mark the tile on your map. You must re-enter that tile and fight the Foes to recover them.

You may Flee towards an already visited tile (roll a 1-in-6 chance of Wandering Monsters) or towards an unexplored tile. This is dangerous. Roll for the tile's content. Any Foes encountered in the new tile will automatically surprise you (roll for the Foes' reaction).

## When Does a Combat End?

A combat ends when:

- 1) All Foes in a tile have been killed or have fled
- 3) All PCs have been killed;
- 4) The party flees.

During combat, a PC may perform only these actions: attack, defend, cast a spell (from memory or from a scroll, prism, bark, magic item), flee, use a Trait, or any other action allowed by the description of the tile or of the Foe.

**Example:** *A rogue may not disarm a Trap or Search the room while the party fights.*

An action described as a Free Action may be performed at any time, and it does not take up the PC's turn.

**Example:** *Drinking a potion is a Free Action. A PC may drink a potion that give an Attack bonus and perform an attack using that bonus on the same turn. Likewise, an Antidote may be imbibed as soon as a PC is poisoned.*

Dropping any hand-held object does not require the expenditure of a turn. Picking up an object from the ground requires 1 turn.



# Combat

## Subdual Damage

To take a Foe alive, PCs may attack with a -1 modifier (or use Sleep spells). When the Foe's last Life is taken, the Foe is subdued and can be tied and its Treasure taken. The Foe is able to walk and follow the party but not do anything else. Spells that inflict damage may not be used to subdue, unless their description states so. Unliving creatures, hordes, Vermin and creatures that do not feel pain may not be subdued. When you fight a group of Foes, you may decide to kill some and subdue the others.

## Loot

When you defeat all the Foes in a room, roll on the Treasure Table. Some Foes have more than others (you'll roll multiple times) or have a Treasure roll modifier (e.g., if the profile says "Treasure -1", roll d6-1 on the Treasure Table). Some have no Treasure. Roll once per encounter, NOT once per creature. Roll for Treasure even if the Foes flee due to a Morale roll. Distribute loot as you see fit. Barbarians may not be assigned magic items: they won't use or carry them. If you need weapons, assume that every slain humanoid Foe has a cheap hand weapon (that breaks if you roll 1 when attacking). Wandering Monsters never have any Treasure except for their weapons.

## Carrying Loot

PCs may carry any number of gems, jewelry, scrolls, magic wands, vials of holy water, and potions. Each PC may carry a maximum of 200 gold pieces, 2 shields (one strapped on the back and one used), 3 weapons (a magic staff counts as a weapon, a two-handed weapon counts as 2 weapons). PCs carrying more than this have -1 on their Defense rolls and to any Climbing, Jumping or Swimming Saves.

## Masterwork Weapons

Masterwork weapons can be found as loot. They are not magical but they are so well made they increase the chance of an Explosion by 1. For example, a Masterwork sword's Attack roll will Explode on a 5 and 6. Masterwork weapons are typically worth d6+4 times the basic price.





# Reactions



# Reactions



Unless surprised, the party has the option to act before the Foes. The PCs may attack right away, or let the Foes act first to see what they'll do. This is called "checking a foe's reactions". Every Foe has a Reactions Table in its description. Roll d6 on the Reactions Table. For Minor Foes, roll once for the whole group. Many different results are possible:

**Offer food and rest:** The Foe is a friend! They offer food, rest, and tending of wounds. Each PC may eat 1 Food and heal 1 Life. If you return here later, they will be gone.

**Peaceful:** The Foe will not fight. You may move through the tile as desired. The Foe will not help you. You may not take its Treasure. If you return here later, they remain peaceful.

**Ignore:** The Foe is preoccupied with other things. It will just ignore you. You may move through the tile. The Foe will not help you. You may not take its Treasure. If you return here later, roll for its Reaction again. On an Ignore Reaction, a PC of your choice may attempt a Stealth Save to steal a single item from the Foe's Treasure (1 magic item, 1 gem or jewel, or a pouch containing up to half the Foe's gp, if any). If the Stealth Save fails, the Foe will fight, striking first.

**Flee:** The Foe turns tail and flees, disappearing. You do not get its Treasure and may not collect its body parts to craft potions or the like. PCs may perform a single attack at +1 at the fleeing Foes.

**Flee if Outnumbered:** If Foes are fewer than party members (including allies, hirelings, animal companions), they flee. Otherwise, they fight.

**Bribe:** The Foes ask for a bribe (a fixed or random amount of gp, a gem, magic item, etc., See the Foe's description). If you pay the bribe, treat as Peaceful, above. If you don't want or can't pay, the Foes fight.

**Fight:** The Foes attack, going first. Foes test Morale when reduced under 50% of their initial number/Life, unless their profile says they never check Morale.

**Fight to the Death:** The Foes fight to the bitter end, asking for no quarter and giving none. These Foes will not test Morale.

**Puzzle:** The Foes ask the party to solve a puzzle or riddle. Doing so requires a successful Save vs. the puzzle's L (if not indicated, it is the same as the Foe's L). Wizards add +L. If the Puzzle is solved, the Foes let you go. Choose a single PC to solve the Puzzle. If it is not solved, the Foes attack, going first. You get only one chance to solve a Puzzle.

**Quest:** The Foe asks you to perform a Quest. If you refuse, the Foe leaves. If you accept, roll on the Quest Table to determine your mission. If you complete the Quest, roll on the Epic Rewards Table.





# Reactions

**Magic Challenge:** If you have a spellcaster, or a magic item that casts spells, the Foe challenges you to a magic duel. The other PCs may not intervene. The spellcaster must perform a spellcasting roll vs. the Foe's L. If the roll is successful, the Foe walks away and the PCs may take its Treasure. If the roll fails, the caster loses 1 Level (the caster may be demoted to Level 0, losing the ability to cast spells until a Level is regained with XP). If you cannot/do not accept the challenge, or if you lose, the Foe will fight. Foes losing a magic challenge count as defeated for purposes of XP rolls.

**Trade Information:** You can gain 25gp for each Clue possessed (the Clues are not lost, the information is simply shared with the encountered creatures who pay for it) and/or buy 1 Clue for 100gp.

**Capture:** Foes use non-lethal attacks to capture instead of killing the PCs. Any PC brought to zero Life will be knocked out and brought to a secret hideout. One Foe (only) flees with the captive. The PCs can't attack it as it flees. The remaining Foes keep fighting to capture the remaining PCs. To find the hideout, spend 3 Clues (either in this dungeon or any another location of your choice) on the "Someone has been imprisoned" Secret. The lair is an underground cave (2d6 x 2d6 squares in size) adjacent to the tile in which you spent the Clues. The captives are guarded by the same Foes that: roll for their numbers as per their description but double the result. Captive PCs will be found with d3 Life, stripped of all their equipment. The PC's allies can fight to rescue their friend. If the Foes have a "Bribe" or any non-violent reaction like Peaceful or Ignore, the party can also pay a ransom (PC's Lx10gp) to free their friend.

**Blood Offering:** This is a Bribe variant. A living PC must give blood (losing 2 Life), or the Foe will fight.

**Trial of Champions:** Foes propose a trial by combat between their champion and a PC of your choice. If they have a boss, it will be their champion. If they do not, they will choose a Minion who is 2 levels higher. The trial will last d6 turns. Determine randomly who goes first. Allies may not intervene. You may not use magic or ranged attacks. Who kills the opponent or inflicts more damage at the end of the trial is the winner. Foes losing a trial will remain in the tile but will let you pass, even if your party goes through the tile later, as long as the champion who won the trial is still with the party. If Foes win, you must leave the tile or the Foes with fight at +1 to their L.

**Special Reactions:** Some Foes have unique Reactions in their description. Foes published in supplements may also have other Reactions.

