Dungeon Crawl Rules (1.2)

Materials

- A Game Board with a Dungeon on it.
- A six-sided die (D6).
- A four-sided die (D4).
- Four (4) Player Tokens.
- Four (4) Reference Cards
- [Number] Room Cards
- [Number] Boss Monster Cards.

- [Number] Easy Monster Cards.
- [Number] Hard Monster Cards.
- [Number] α Item Cards.
- [Number] Ω Item Cards.
- Twenty (20) Action Cards; four of each of the five actions.

Table Areas

- Board; The game board representing the Dungeon being explored and everything on it.
- Hand; The hand of cards held by each player and kept off the table.
- Equipment; The face-up cards in front of each individual player that is considered part of their equipped gear.
- Loot Pool; A pile of face-up cards next to the game board belonging to nobody specific.
- Discard; A pile of face-down cards next to the game board that were previously used.

Setup

1. Set up the Board so it is easily accessible to all players.
   a. Shuffle the Rooms and place one face-down on each Room on the board, including Monster Rooms.
   b. Shuffle all Boss cards together. Select one, and place it on the final Monster Room at the end of the Dungeon.

c. Separate the Monsters into the Easy and Hard tiers. Shuffle each tier separately.

Easy monsters have a 💀 on them.

Hard monsters have a 💀 on them.

   i.   Place one Easy Monster on the first Monster Room near the beginning of the Dungeon.

   ii. Place two Hard Monsters on the third Monster Room near the end of the Dungeon.

   iii. Shuffle the remaining cards together. Place two Monsters on the second Monster Room near the middle of the Dungeon.

d. Place Player tokens near the first Room of the Dungeon.

2. Each Player chooses one of the 6 different Buff cards to place in their Equipment.

3. Give each Player one of the following Actions: Forward, Left or Right, Rest, Donate Loot, Take Loot.

4. Shuffle the α and Ω Item decks separately. Deal 5 "Item α" (Alpha items) cards to each Player. Each Player may then do one of three things with each card:

a. Add it to their Equipment.

b. Add it to the Loot Pool.

c. Keep it in their Hand.

Gameplay

The game is divided into two primary phases: Exploration and Combat. Exploration sees the Players walk through the dungeon, searching for loot, encountering interesting rooms, and trading items. Combat is when the Party faces down monsters and bosses. The Players use their

Equipment and Actions in order to defeat the monster(s). Several Cards have different effects depending on what phase the Players are in. Those effects are listed on each card.

Exploration effects are listed after the map symbol:

Combat effects are listed after the sword symbol:

Item Cards are divided into four main categories: Weapon, Armor, Spell, and Consumable. Weapon, Armor, and Spell Cards are very similar in that they must be equipped to be used. Equipping these Cards requires a Rest Action if they were not equipped at the beginning of the game. Consumables, however, can only be held and used in a Player's Hand. Using these Item Cards will be key to surviving Combat against the myriad of monsters in the Dungeon (See Combat).

Exploration Phase

As the Players explore the dungeon, they will come across various different rooms. These rooms may have challenges or other potential goodies should the Players be willing to attempt them. Players may decline any Exploration challenge on a Room card if it allows. Each Player makes this choice individually. Only the Players who are in the Room can interact with that Room's effects. This is important as the Dungeon has multiple splits within it. Room Cards have both Exploration and Combat effects and the activated effect depends on the current Phase.

At the start of an Exploration Turn, each Player chooses an Action from their Hand. They reveal them simultaneously. See *Actions* for what each Action does. Exploration Turns are resolved in the following order:

1. Forward.

2. Left/Right.

3. Donate Loot.
4. Take Loot.
5. Resolve ongoing Room effects.
6. Rest.

7. Resolve Exploration Death effects. (see *Death*)
8. Enter new Rooms; Resolve any "On Reveal" effects.

Upon entering a new Room, the Room Card is flipped face-up. The Exploration text is then read aloud. The text is followed only if it has the "On Reveal" keywords on it. If multiple new Rooms are entered on the same Turn, the Players decide which to flip over first. If no Monster Rooms were entered, the next turn is an Exploration Turn.

When directed to draw an Item Card, only one item deck may be drawn from. If the Players have not defeated the 2nd Monster Room, they draw from the weaker α Tier (Alpha Tier). Once they have defeated the 2nd Monster Room, they draw from the stronger Ω Tier (Omega Tier).

Combat Phase

When any Player enters a Monster Room, they force all Players into the Combat Phase, regardless if all Players are in the same Monster Room or not. Both the Room Card and Monster Card(s) are flipped face-up.

As all players are affected by the Combat Phase, Room Effects switch to their Combat effects, regardless if they are Monster Rooms or not. Players are required to resolve Monster Room effects. During Combat, Players may use their Equipment to attack the Monster(s) or defend themselves.

At the start of a Combat Turn, each Player chooses either an Action from their Hand or a piece of Equipment to use. Note that Actions behave differently in Combat than in Exploration. The selections are revealed simultaneously, and they resolve in the specified order below. When

either an Action or Equipment card is used, they are flipped face-down in the Player's

Equipment. These Cards may be recovered if Rest is used. Combat Turns are resolved in the

following order:

1. Forward
2. Left/Right
3. Donate Loot
4. Take Loot
5. Use Equipment; Equipment effects resolve immediately.
6. Resolve ongoing Room effects.

7. Monster(s) Attack.
8. Rest
9. Resolve Combat Death effects. (See *Death*)
10. Enter new Rooms; Resolve any "On Reveal" effects.

If the Player is unable to use any Equipment or Actions on their turn, they pick up their used

Actions only. Their Equipment remains used. If a Player is not yet in the Monster Room, the

Forward & Left/Right Actions move that Player towards the Monster Room instead of using their

Combat Effect, and they are still used.

When a Player uses an Equipment card, the effect resolves immediately. If multiple Players use

Equipment Cards, their resolution order is up for the Players to decide. If there are multiple

targetable monsters, Players that deal damage may select their target(s). When a Monster is

reduced to 0 or less HP, it is removed from the Dungeon, and each player draws an Item Card,

adding it to their Hand.

Once all Monsters in a Monster Room are defeated, the Combat Turn finishes, and the next turn

is an Exploration Turn. If at least one Player and the Monster(s) are still alive, the cycle repeats

as another Combat Turn.

Monster Attacks similarly follow the rules listed on the Monster Card. Often, Monster attacks

require a die roll with either a d6 ⬚ or a d4 △. Use the result to determine what the

Monster does. If there are multiple Monsters, the order of their attack may be decided by the Players. Damage dealt by Monsters may be directed towards any Player if not otherwise specified. If a Monster Attack reduces a Player to 0 or less HP, that Player dies. (See *Death*).

Damage is divided into two classes. Physical ⬤ and Magical ☄

Actions

There are five Actions that Players can use during the game. During Exploration phases, any used actions go back into the Player's hand. During Combat, Actions are consumed and placed face down in the Player's Equipment. They remain there until a Rest action is used. Below is the overview of the five Actions and their effects in both phases. They are listed in order of resolution.

- Forward

    - 🗺: The Player advances through the Dungeon along the most straight forward path. If none exists, the Player chooses which direction to go.

    - ⚔: The next Physical damage ⬤ dealt has +2 to its damage.

- Left/Right

    - 🗺: The Player advances through the Dungeon using a path that goes left or right of the current room, according to the Player's choice. If only a straight path exists, they go along that path instead.

    - ⚔: The Player takes -2 damage for the next 2 Phases.

- Donate Loot

- o ⬛: The Player moves any number 🃏 of Cards from their Hand and/or Equipment into the Loot Pile.

- o ⚔: The Player moves a single 🂠 Card from their Hand or Equipment into the Loot Pile.

- **Take Loot**

  - o ⬛: The Player moves any number 🃏 of Cards from the Loot Pile into their Hand.

  - o ⚔: The Player moves a single 🂠 Card from the Loot Pile into their Hand.

- **Rest**

  - a. ⬛: The Player recovers all of their HP ♡ and may exchange any number 🃏 of Cards between their Hand and Equipment freely. Used Action & Equipment cards are recovered and flipped face-up. Used Actions return to the Player's Hand.

  - o ⚔: The Player *either* recovers all of their HP ♡, *or* recovers Action & Equipment cards, flipping Equipment face up and retrieving Actions to their hand.

Death

Whether it be from traps or monsters, Dungeon Crawling is a dangerous business, and Death is possible. When a Player is reduced to 0 or less HP, they die. The effects of death change depending on the Phase that a Player died in. The Player will return as a new character near the end of the next Exploration Turn (See Exploration Turn Order). If multiple Players died in the

same Turn, handle each Player's death one at a time but in any order. That is, complete the whole Death effect list for a Player before moving on to the next dead Player, but the order of Players may be chosen. If all Players are dead at the same time, the game ends and Players lose.

<u>Exploration Death effects</u>

1. The Player discards all Item Cards from their Hand to the Discard Pile, but they retain all their Action Cards.

2. Each other Player that is in the same Room as the dead Player chooses one Equipment to save. The saved Equipment is put in the Loot Pool.

3. All other Equipment is put into the Discard Pile.

4. The dead Player trades their Buff Card for a new one. If possible, they must use a Buff Card they have not had before.

5. The Player returns to the Dungeon in the same Room they died in as long as there's a Player there.

<u>Combat Death effects</u>

1. The Player discards all Cards from their Hand into the Discard Pile, but they retain all their previously held Actions. Used Actions remain face down.

2. The Player discards all Equipment Cards into the Discard Pile.

3. The Player waits until the next Exploration Phase for the Exploration Death Effects to happen, specifically steps 4 & 5 above.

End of the Game

The game ends when one of two things happen. If the Players defeats the Dungeon's Boss, then the Players win the game. If all the Players are dead at the same time, then the Players lose the game.

Card Keyword Reference

- "On Exiting:" The effect triggers when a Forward or Left/Right movement is resolved.

- "On Death:" The effect triggers when the Monster dies.

- "On Reveal:" The effect triggers as soon as the Card is revealed face-up.

- "Retaliate:" The effect triggers on taking damage against the source of that damage. Note that taking zero damage does *not* trigger this effect.

- "While Inside:" The effect triggers when Room effects are resolved.

Symbol Reference

- Any Number of Cards; The Action may be done with any number of Cards.

- Armored; Damage less than or equal to the number is changed to zero.

- Combat Effect; Effect only occurs during a Combat Turn.

- D4; A 4-sided die should be rolled. The resulting number determines the effect.

- D6; A 6-sided die should be rolled. The resulting number determines the effect.

- Each Player; Each Player in the same room is affected by the effect. Order is up to the Players.

- Easy Monster; An Easy tier Monster. May appear in the first two Monster Rooms.

- **S** Exploration effect; Effect only occurs during an Exploration Turn.

- **☠** Hard Monster; A Hard tier Monster. May appear in the second and third Monster Rooms.

- **♡** HP; The amount of damage a Player or Monster can take before dying equal to the number inside the heart.

- **☄** Magical Damage; The effect deals Magical Damage equal to the associated number next to the meteor.

- **👤** One Player; Only a single Player is affected by the effect. The Players may choose who is affected if there are multiple who could be affected.

- **💧** Physical Damage; The effect deals Physical Damage equal to the associated number next to the drop.

- **☐** Single Card; The Action may be done with exactly one (1) Card.

Dungeon Crawl Playtest Report

Paper Prototype v 1.0

Pre-assessment: I think I have the majority of the ruleset completed. I tried to write the rulebook in a coherent manner, and I think it can be understood by first-time players. It is a little clunky, but it should work. The gameplay pieces, however, are incomplete. The game board exists, but in the name of saving colored ink, it was printed in grayscale. By doing that, the room connections can be hard to read at a glance. The board is also extremely bare bones, with simple rectangles representing the rooms and no background art. It works, though. I have a distinct lack of cards, however. I created the five action cards for each of the four players, but I don't have enough room and monster cards to fill the dungeon. Similarly, I have virtually no item cards. As a result, I will need to improvise what items the players will get using theater of the mind. By far and away, the limiting factor of this game's prototype phase will be the lack of cards.

Questions: The main questions I'll have about the playtesting will be about whether the players felt teamwork while going through the Dungeon, particularly during combat. Furthermore, I want to know if they had any combat strategies beyond just hitting the monsters. With the limited number of cards at my disposal, that strategy may not develop at all.

Participants: Holly, Nicole, Di, and Alex

Result: As expected, the lack of cards was the main problem with this playtest. In order to ensure *something* got played, I improvised by saying each player had two equipment pieces that did 2 damage each. Not thinking ahead, however, caused the combat to fall flat on its face. The enemies have such low health that there was little to no strategic decision making; the players just all-out attacked the monster. I also noticed that the players had trouble with the simultaneous

selection of actions and equipment. This is likely because simultaneous actions were not a key part of the game, especially since the order actions resolved almost always did not matter. The game still functions by having players choose in an order, but they really need to reveal them at the same time.

Interview: The players noted the lack of cards, which was to be expected. They pointed out that the monsters did not have enough health to make combat strategic at all. They could just do four attacks and deal eight damage a round using the made-up items that I gave them. They also asked about any amount of progression, especially with respect to the items & gear. Such a system had not been previously considered, but it would make the game more interesting as it went on. They also requested a reference card to know what order the actions resolved in.

Planned Changes: Obviously, the balance of the game needs to be considered with both the player's action economy and monster health. That can be tweaked in further playtests once more cards have been created. At a minimum, however, the monsters need more health. Reference cards are easy to create, and it makes sense to have them regardless of what is going on. Progression can be handled by creating two tiers of items. Cards get drawn from one tier early in the game and they get drawn from the other tier later in the game. Adjustments to the rules will be needed after these elements have been created.

Dungeon Crawl Iconography

Theme

My game Dungeon Crawl is based heavily in classic RPG exploration and combat mechanics. Players collect different items as they explore the Dungeon and kill monsters within. Thus, the theme revolves around both the gear discovered and the required information for both exploration and combat. Due to the intended mechanics of very limited resources and actions, I want the game to have a slightly darker tone than the average D&D Party. I want players to take the game seriously, even if the game's events or their own playstyles change to be more amusing. Therefore, the iconography and art direction would lead towards utilitarian and dark, without venturing into grimdark like Warhammer 40k. With those in mind, I want to minimize long text on cards and instead focus on symbology to convey information in shorthand.

Symbols

The symbols I used for the game & cards are intended to be simple and easy to read. The rules of the game have a Reference for the symbols used on the cards (copied below), allowing for a higher degree of information density on the cards themselves. While the art is not finalized in any way, it conveys enough information even in its simplicity.

-   Any Number of Cards; The Action may be done with any number of Cards.

-   Armored; Damage less than or equal to the number is changed to zero.

-   Combat Effect; Effect only occurs during a Combat Turn.

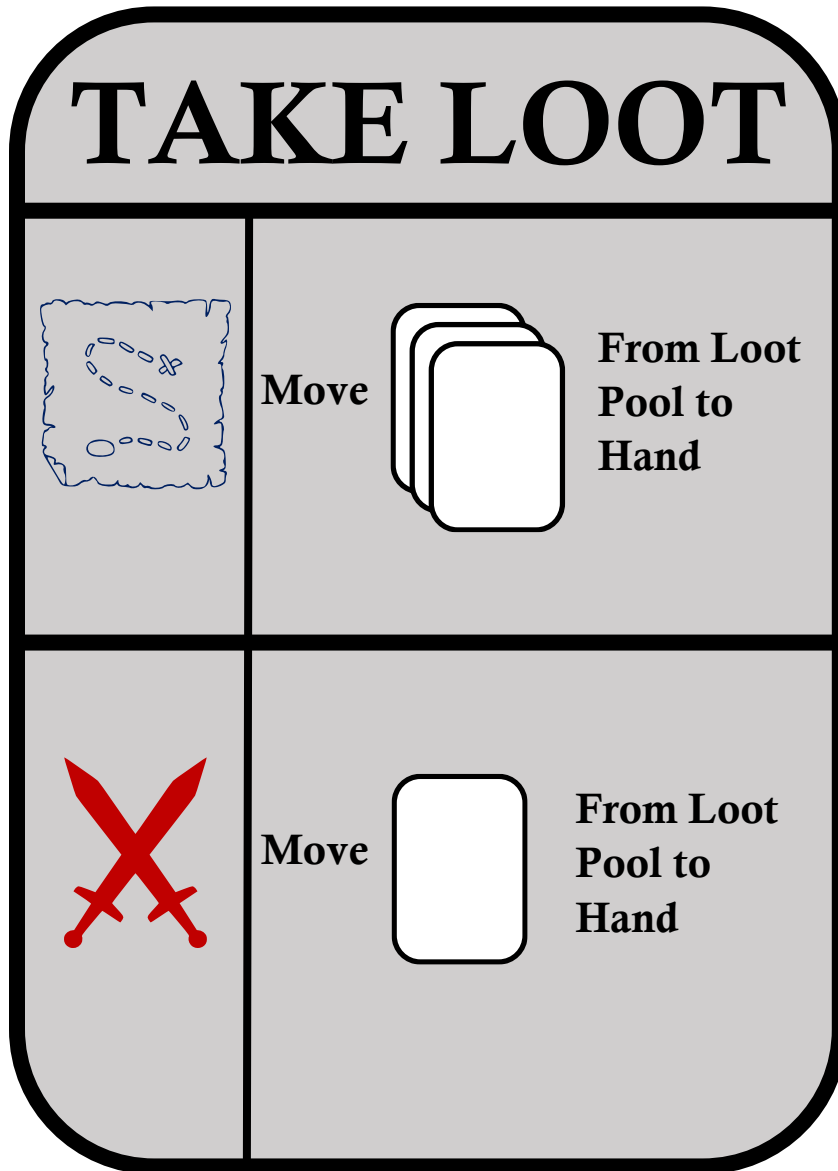-   D4; A 4-sided die should be rolled. The resulting number determines the effect.

- D6; A 6-sided die should be rolled. The resulting number determines the effect.

- Each Player; Each Player in the same room is affected by the effect. Order is up to the Players.

- Easy Monster; An Easy tier Monster. May appear in the first two Monster Rooms.

- Exploration effect; Effect only occurs during an Exploration Turn.

- Hard Monster; A Hard tier Monster. May appear in the second and third Monster Rooms.

- HP; The amount of damage a Player or Monster can take before dying equal to the number inside the heart.

- Magical Damage; The effect deals Magical Damage equal to the associated number next to the meteor.

- One Player; Only a single Player is affected by the effect. The Players may choose who is affected if there are multiple who could be affected.

- Physical Damage; The effect deals Physical Damage equal to the associated number next to the drop.

- Single Card; The Action may be done with exactly one (1) Card.

Card Design

Continuing the theme of simple, utilitarian design for the game as a whole, I have designed some mock-ups of various cards that would appear in the game. Again, the values,
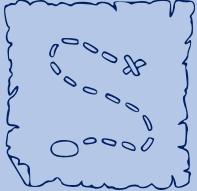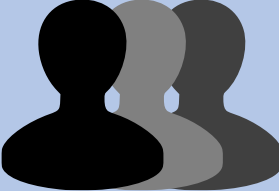
symbols, and artwork are not even remotely finalized, but they give a basic idea of what each card category should look like in the game:

Take Loot Action Card

TAKE LOOT

[treasure map icon]	**Move** [stack of cards icon] **From Loot Pool to Hand**
[crossed red swords icon]	**Move** [single card icon] **From Loot Pool to Hand**

STOREROOM

Draws

Draw Limit: 2 Turns

Takes **1**

OWLBEAR 💀

⚔️	Roll △ 4
1	👤 Takes 🩸 4
2-3	👥 Takes 🩸 2
4	👥 Takes 🩸 4

Retaliate 🩸 1 | ❤️ 25