

Enemies

In Last Odyssey, every character that is capable of fighting the player characters in combat is called an *enemy*. Not every NPC is an enemy. In general, if a character has the capacity to last for more than a couple of seconds in a stand-up fight against an armed opponent, they are deserving of a corresponding set of combat statistics.

Enemies in Combat

Each enemy on the battlefield has the same combat statistics that player characters do, as well as a set of abilities, each with their own MP cost. Enemies can also take any of the basic set of actions outlined in the Actions, Turns, and Rounds subsection of the Combat Rules except for Summon Eidolon. The GM is responsible for narrating and controlling enemy behavior during battle. However, rather than simply treating a battle as a chess match between them and the players, GMs should instead play them like characters. This is especially important because learning enemy abilities and behavior is an intended part of the experience of playing Last Odyssey. Here are some principles the GM should stick to when narrating combat:

1. Provide context. Combat in Last Odyssey is an abstract representation of a fight rather than a straightforward simulation. All actions taken by participating characters should also be things that they do in the narrative. For example, rather than stating that an enemy uses the Fire Burst ability, the GM should describe the involved sensory details.
2. Hide enemy statistics. The Scan ability and the mechanics around information assume that players will be ignorant of the current HP, MP, Shell, statistics, and abilities of an enemy unless they put effort into learning them, and thus the GM should not tell them until the right conditions are met.
3. Tell players what they've done, and what's been done to them. GMs should tell them how much damage they are doing to enemies, what status effects have been inflicted on all characters, and how much damage they are taking. While there is a danger of leaning into "table talk" here, good narration can incorporate this in a way that isn't too disruptive.

While enemies in combat are mostly the same as player characters, there are a few notable differences. First, enemies begin with a Shell of their elemental type in addition to their HP, and this Shell can be colorless if the enemy's elemental type is also colorless. Enemies also count as their elemental type for the purpose of calculating the damage they receive. Finally, each enemy has a creature type, which is a single word that describes what kind of being it is. Creature type interacts with a few equipment upgrades as well as a number of travel mechanics. In the base game, there are ten creature types: Human, Construct, Fairy, Animal, Demon, Angel, Elemental, Undead, Dragon, and Horror.

An enemy's description in the Monster Manual will list their Tier, their creature type, their elemental type, and whether they are Normal, Elite, or an Antagonist for the purposes of XP calculation. It will look like this:
(XP Type Tier, Creature Type, Elemental Type)

Encounter Creation

In Last Odyssey, a baseline enemy encounter that is challenging but beatable for a party of four of a given tier consists of three to five Normal enemies, about the same number as there are player characters. Elite tier enemies are worth five times as much XP, but in battle they are worth about three Normal tier enemies. The GM does not have to throw encounters at the players that are precisely of their tier. Most player characters will be equipped to handle enemies of power equal to plus or minus two tiers. Any higher and they will be numerically outmatched, and any lower and the encounter will be trivial.

Every enemy encounter in Last Odyssey is more than just a combat challenge. All enemies have a reason for engaging in violence that affects their behavior in combat and once it is over. If all enemies in combat are downed, this means that they have been killed. Depending on their motivation, enemies may flee in order to preserve their lives. In addition, the motivation of a group of enemies also affects how they will treat the players when they are downed. Keep in mind that players are protected by fate except when they face other characters who possess the power of Anima. In the event that the player characters are all downed in combat, what enemies do next depends on their actual motivation for fighting the characters. GMs are free to come up with varying motivations, but here are some examples:

Self-Preservation. Some enemies are merely fighting in order to live. When these enemies are victorious, they will simply flee without further incident. If they are fighting to defend themselves, they most likely do not have the possibility of retreat, but in the event that they do they will flee if more than one of their comrades is downed. If they win, they will merely run away.

Greed. Enemies such as bandits or raiders fight primarily to enrich themselves. If the players are downed, their enemies will either steal all of their cr, all of their battle items if they have no cr, or all of their Supplies and travel items if they have nothing else. Players who have nothing will simply be left in the dirt. Greedy enemies will generally also be cowards, and will try to flee after the first of them is downed.

Hunger. Wild animals and desperate people will sometimes resort to attacking travelers to steal their food. If they are desperate enough to attack the players, they are also desperate enough to fight to the death. If they manage to down the players, they will steal their Supplies first, their cr if there are no Supplies available, and will leave the players alone if they don't find anything else.

Territory. Enemies that are fighting to defend a patch of land, such as a dungeon, a Domain, or a fiefdom, will fight nearly to the death to defend it, with only the last remaining enemy even willing to flee if at all. If they manage to down the players and are able to do so, they will drag them to the boundary and leave them there. If the territory is large enough that this isn't immediately possible, the players will instead find themselves kidnapped and either forced to labor or be food for their kidnappers or be ejected later on, or possibly both.

Warfare. In the event that enemies constitute an invading force, they will not retreat unless the order is given from whoever is leading them. In battle, this means they will be highly coordinated and will fight to the death. If the player characters are important participants in the battle, being defeated means they will be taken prisoner. If they are less important, they will pass out and will wake up after the battle is over. While this isn't realistic, hinging the outcomes of larger battles on whether player characters survive them is a great way for GMs to ramp up the dramatic tension of a scene.

If players feel squeamish about murdering their opponents, the GM could give them the option to try to pull their punches in battle. To do so, a player character must declare that they are executing an attack meant to knock an enemy out rather than kill. The damage of the attack, if it hits, is calculated as though they had rolled a 1 on their attack roll. If the enemy is downed, they will be temporarily incapacitated instead of killed.

Enemy Creation

The Monster Manual provides 100 enemies, 10 of each tier, for players to fight as they grow their characters. GMs who want to introduce enemies not included in the Monster Manual have a few options. First, they could take an enemy from the Monster Manual and change it superficially, either by altering its creature type or element and the elemental types of its abilities and then changing its name and appearance. They could also take an existing enemy and change its abilities. Whatever the GM decides, it is recommended that they not hew too closely to any one roster of "canon" enemies. This is partially to maintain the sense of danger and discovery for players, and partially because learning about the abilities and statistics of the enemies that player characters will face on the road is a core part of the experience of Last Odyssey.

If GMs find the core enemies presented in the Monster Manual insufficient for their campaign, they may also decide to create their own instead. It is recommended that they have a clear concept in mind before doing so, and make sure that that enemy type isn't already listed in the Monster Manual. If this is the case, they must first choose their enemy's tier, their creature type, and their elemental type, as well as whether or not the enemy is a Normal tier enemy, an Elite tier enemy, or a Phase of an Antagonist. The *creature type* of an enemy is a single word that best describes the type of living being they are in the context of the setting. There are ten creature types available in the Monster Manual: Human, Construct, Fairy, Animal, Demon, Angel, Elemental, Undead, Dragon, and Horror. There are a few special items, such as weapons with the Slayer feature, that interact with an enemy's creature type. An enemy's *elemental type* determines the damage that different elemental attacks do to them, and is explained in more detail in the Combat section. Finally, an enemy's *tier* indirectly determines their combat statistics by setting the number of attribute points available to allocate to determine their statistics. Each enemy's combat statistics are derived from a set of four attributes, Aggression, Toughness, Magic and Cunning. In short:

Aggression is a measure of how vicious an enemy is in melee combat, and determines an enemy's Physical Attack, Initiative, and Physical Accuracy.

Toughness is a measure of how much damage an enemy can take, and determines an enemy's Physical Defense, Resistance, and Health.

Magic is a measure of how adept an enemy is at dealing with magic, and determines an enemy's Magical Attack, Magical Defense, and Mana.

Cunning is a measure of how clever and evasive an enemy is, and determines an enemy's Evasion, Magical Accuracy, and Status Accuracy.

When creating a new enemy, the GM must spend a fixed amount of points on each of these attributes that depends on the enemy's tier. At tier 1, Normal enemies have 6 points to distribute, Elite enemies have 8, and a Phase of an Antagonist has 10. Each additional tier grants 2 more points to Normal enemies, 3 more points to Elite enemies, and 4 more points to Antagonists. The minimum value that an enemy can have in each of their attributes is 0. The maximum value that a Normal enemy can have in a given attribute is 10, the maximum value an Elite can have is 15, and the maximum that an Antagonist can have is 20. In addition to attribute points, the Health, Mana, and Initiative of all enemies are adjusted by a number called the enemy's *tier multiplier*. The tier multipliers for a Normal enemy are 5 for their Health and Mana and 1 for their Initiative, Elites have multipliers of 10 for their Health and Mana and 2 for their Initiative, and Antagonists have 20 for their Health and Mana and 2 for their Initiative.

Once attribute points have been allocated, the enemy's combat statistics are determined by their attributes by the following formulae:

Health = [Toughness]x5 + [Tier]x[Tier Multiplier].

Mana = [Magic]x5 + [Tier]x[Tier Multiplier].

Physical Attack = [Aggression]x2.

Magical Attack = [Magic]x2.

Physical Defense = [Toughness].

Magical Defense = [Magic].

Evasion = [Cunning]x2.

Resistance = [Toughness]x2.

Physical Accuracy = [Aggression]x2.

Magical Accuracy = [Cunning]x2.

Status Accuracy = [Cunning] x2.

Unlike player characters, enemies' maximum HP and Shell are distinct values. The total combined HP plus Shell of a single enemy is equal to its Health, and the ratio of its HP to its Shell is equal to the ratio of its Toughness plus its Aggression to its Magic plus its Cunning. For example, an enemy with an Aggression of 4, a Toughness of 5, a Magic of 3, and a Cunning of 3 would have HP equal to three fifths of its Health and Shell equal to two fifths of its Health. If the value calculated isn't exact (and it often won't be) just round to the nearest integer. Once statistics are calculated, the GM can then adjust them if they like. When doing so, they should remember that 1 point of Physical or Magical Defense is worth 2 points of Physical Attack, Magical Attack, Evasion, Resistance, Physical Accuracy, Magical Accuracy, or

Status Accuracy, and also worth 5 points of Health or Mana.

After setting the combat statistics of an enemy, the GM should then choose its abilities. There is no strict limit on how many or how few abilities an enemy can have, but 3-8 is a good range. All of an enemy's abilities should be drawn from the lists of abilities for character jobs and classes and from the abilities of all other enemies in the Monster Manual of their tier or below. In the case of character abilities, enemies can only have access to abilities associated with a rank of a class or job equal to twice their tier. In addition to active abilities, enemies may also have passive abilities, which are extra effects that activate when certain conditions are met. For example, an enemy might have an ability that makes them immune to water damage, or might gain the Focused status effect when they lose their Shell. GMs are encouraged to come up with passives on their own, and should use the passive abilities of the enemies in the Monster Manual as guidelines for how to do this.

After an enemy's combat statistics and abilities have been determined, they are technically ready to be deployed into a campaign. However, GMs should remember that an enemy is a living entity that makes decisions based on imperatives other than battle tactics. The last thing they do, then, should be to determine the enemy's behavior. At minimum, GMs should note down what other enemies they will fight alongside, if any, and what pattern of abilities they will use in combat. For example, an enemy that is mindless and aggressive might attack any of their opponents in the front row at random, while a group of enemies using squadron tactics will rotate out who is in the front row based on their remaining HP and Shell. Once this is done, the enemy has been created.

In total, GMs creating a new enemy should complete the following steps:

1. Determine its tier and whether it is Normal, Elite, or an Antagonist.
2. Determine its creature type.
3. Determine its elemental type.
4. Determine its attributes.
5. Assign combat statistics based on the values of its attributes, and adjust as needed.
6. Determine its abilities.
7. Determine its behavior in and out of combat.