

# dungeons

art goes here

# deep

by Reed Hummel

Item	Cost ( sp )
10' Pole	1
50' Rope	1
<i>Assorted common herbs</i>	10
<i>Pack</i>	5
Flask of oil	2
<i>Flint &amp; Steel</i>	3
Fresh Rations (5)	5
Handheld mirror	5
<b>Heavy Weapon</b>	80
Holy Water	25
Iron Spikes(5)	1
Lantern	10
Large Sack	2
Light Weapon	15
Preserved Rations(5)	15
Quiver of Arrows / Bolts	10
<i>Small Sack</i>	1
Standard weapon (incl. bows)	50
<i>Thieves' Tools</i>	25
Torches (6)	1
Wine	1

Wineskin	1
Trades' Tools	2

Action	HP Gained
a nights rest	1 HD
1 day's rest	2 HD
in town 3 days	Full

Type	Cost ( sp )	Rating
Unarmored	0	10
Gambeson	10	8
Leather	50	7
Chain Mail	200	6
Plate & Mail	800	4
Small shield	50	-1
Large shield	100	-2

Level	Heroic XP	Silver
2	6	6,000
3	12	12,000
4	24	24,000
5	48	48,000
6	96	96,000
7	192	192,000

# 0. Introduction

## 0.1 For new players

If you have never played a tabletop role-playing game before, welcome! This might be a bumpy ride, but it should be well worth it.

The concept is fairly simple: you and a number of friends gather to solve puzzles, engage with a fictional world, and work together to generate a tale. One of you will play as the referee, adjudicating rules and devising the challenges. The others will take on the roles of people in the world, and make their mark on it.

For whoever takes on the role of referee, you may find some tips at the end for how to run a fun and engaging game. Refereeing takes lots of practice, so do not be discouraged if at first things don't go your way. All referees in the past have suffered the same way at first.

## 0.2 For experienced players

If you are familiar with RPGS, then this system can be described fairly quickly. The ultimate goals of the system are:

- ◆ quick character creation
- ◆ hackable systems, which should be easy to mix and match with your own.
- ◆ a simple rule-set, that can be kept in your head all at once.

This game tries to fit into the traditions of the Old School Revolution, which emphasizes **sandbox play**, **player agency**, and **rulings over rules**. If you aren't familiar, hopefully this gives you a taste and you find it to your liking.

The author was inspired by many many systems and people, more than could be listed here. A few were:

- ◆ Jeff Rients' Random Advancement, for the basis of my classes.
- ◆ Goblin Punch, for the skill advancement system.
- ◆ Maze Rats, for many things.
- ◆ Papers Pencils, for the Magic Words system used for the Sorcerer class.
- ◆ Symbaroum, for the Corruption mechanic.

# 1. Mechanics

## 1.1 Testing a Quality

All player characters have 2 qualities, **Physique (PHY)** and **Thought (THT)**. Each is generated by rolling 3d6. Don't worry too much if you have low numbers - rolling on these qualities is generally a last resort, and shouldn't come up too frequently.

In order to test a quality, roll a twenty-sided die (1d20) and subtract/add any relevant bonuses/penalties. If the result is equal to or lower than the quality being tested, that's a success!

in this document, **bonuses are negative numbers and penalties are positive numbers** - they apply to the roll, not to the target number. So a roll of 13 with a bonus of -2 would be calculated to a final result of 11.

## 1.2 Skills

Every character has a 2/6 chance to succeed at any skill. So, to test if you succeed, roll 1d6. On a 1 or a 2 you succeed.

**Every time you succeed at a skill, place a check-mark next to it.** Once you have 3 check-marks, and are in a village or similarly safe place, you can spend time training and roll to attempt to increase your ability. The referee will tell you whether you have to test PHY or THT in order to advance the skill, and if you succeed at your quality test, then increase your skill by one rank.

If, through advancement or other bonuses you have a 6/6 chance in a skill, roll two dice. On boxcars (2 6s) you fail.

**Skills can be anything you like.** Try to make them specific and useful when interacting with the physical world, rather than general traits like *Investigation*, *Perception*, or *History*.

## 1.3 Advantage

Any roll can be modified by advantage or disadvantage. This just means roll two dice instead of 1. For advantage, take the most beneficial roll. For disadvantage, you must take the least beneficial roll.

# 2. Character Creation

Character Creation has 5 steps.

1. Choose a character class.
2. Roll your class abilities from your class's table.
3. Generate your qualities and pick your skills. These are your primary numerical statistics.
4. Purchase any equipment you might want, noting down attacks and armor rating.
5. Give your character a name and draw a portrait.

## 2.1 Pick a Character Class

Your character's class is their archetype. It defines what your character is good at doing, as well as gives them special abilities. It also affects how many hits they can take before becoming seriously injured.

See the Class Descriptions document for a listing of all the classes and their abilities.

Make sure to note down the hit points, starting equipment, and any abilities not from the random tables.

## 2.2 Choose and Roll Your Class Abilities

For each character class in Dungeons Deep there are two tables - a list of abilities you pick from and a list of abilities you roll on. This latter table is included to encourage dynamic and unpredictable characters, that might subvert your expectations, lending the game some life and spontaneity outside the plans of the players and referee.

At first level pick an ability from the first table and also roll on the table of random abilities. When leveling up, on even levels you will pick another ability, while on odd levels you will roll a random ability.

Also remember to roll your Hit Die (HD) and record the result. Those will be your Hit Points (HP), which is how much damage your character can take before rolling on the Death and Dismemberment table.

## 2.3 Allocate Skill Points

At first level, every player gets two skill points. These can be put into anything the player desires, increasing their chance of succeeding at skill checks by 1.

Make sure to ask your referee about what skills might get called for and if any are off limits. For example, some referees don't use Search or Knowledge skills, and rely on player actions and background to determine those kinds of results.

It's also totally fair to take on skills that won't be regularly used but still make sense for your character.

a note on choosing skills

A personal recommendation is to choose skills that rely on the physical world. Skills that abstract that relation, like *Deception*, *Investigate*, and Search end up hiding parts of the game that you might find fulfilling. Simply rolling a die to deceive a guard might be less fun than coming up with a believable story. The same is true for finding a trap. Rolling investigation to find a trap might not feel like as much a success as using your experience in other dungeons to determine that there is a pressure plate beneath the rug ahead of you.

## 2.4 Generate Your Qualities

You have two qualities: Physique (PHY) and Thought (THT). Generate them with 3d6, in order. If their sum is less than 18, you may choose to reroll them both.



These qualities act as saves vs. traps, spells, poisons, etc. The referee may also ask for rolls when testing purely physical or mental struggles, under which no more specific skill applies. In addition, Thought factors into how many spells a character can cast before they are Corrupted.

## 2.5 Purchase Equipment

### equipment and encumbrance

Each character has a number of equipment slots equal to their PHY quality. This may be modified with other items, like packs.

*Items in italics* are non-encumbering (take no slot). 100 coins/jewels (of any type) count as one encumbering item. Items coupled with a quantity stack according that quantity. **Bold items** take up two slots.

Each character begins with **3d6x10 silver coins** with which to buy equipment, in addition to the gear they receive from the class.

Item	Cost ( sp )	Notes
10' Pole	1	-
50' Rope	1	-
Assorted common herbs	10	-
Pack	5	Carry +2 extra
Flask of oil	2	4 hours of oil

Flint & Steel	3	-
Fresh Rations (5)	5	-
Handheld mirror	5	-
<b>Heavy Weapon</b>	80	two handed - 1d8 damage
Holy Water	25	*
Iron Spikes(5)	1	-
Lantern	10	-
Large Sack	2	-
Light Weapon	15	1d4 damage
Preserved Rations(5)	15	-
Quiver of Arrows / Bolts	10	20 pieces
Small Sack	1	-
Standard weapon (incl. bows)	50	1d6 damage
Thieves' Tools	25	*
Torches (6)	1	-
Wine	1	-
Wineskin	1	-

Trades' Tools	2	-
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### notes:

**Holy Water** deals 2d6 damage to undead and magical creatures. It can also be thrown, breaking and releasing the holy water on a roll of 1-3 on a d4.

**Fresh Rations** spoil in 5 days. **Preserved rations** take years.

**Thief's tools** are required to attempt the picking of locks and the rigging of anything other than rudimentary traps like tripwires and dangerously poised cauldrons of oil.

**Assorted Common Herbs** can, with a successful THT check, be used to halve the time it takes to heal from wounds or diseases.

**Heavy Weapons** impose disadvantage on to-hit rolls unless wielded by a warrior or someone who has gained expertise in them.

## Armor

Armor determines your armor rating.

TYPE	COST ( sp )	RATING
Unarmored	0	10
Gambeson	10	8
Leather	50	7
Chain Mail	200	6

Plate & Mail*	800	4
Small shield**	50	-1
Large shield	100	-2

### notes:

Plate and mail armor takes time (5 minutes) to don and doff.

Characters wearing anything heavier than leather have **disadvantage on stealth-related skill rolls**.

**Shields may be sundered** when hit if players choose, negating all damage from the attack from the hit while rendering them useless thereafter.

## Weapons

Weapons have several characteristics. Firstly, they have their damage die. Additionally, some weapons have specific abilities, that modify their damage or to-hit chances. Finally, some have effects that trigger on **Master Strokes** (natural rolls of 1 or 2.) **Note that most weapons you can buy in a store have none of these features.**

### WEAPON QUALITIES

**Reach:** attack someone from 10 feet away. When an enemy tries to approach, you get an additional attack against them. If you hit, they aren't able to get any closer to you, though they take no damage.

**Brutal:** you caused such a deep wound with this weapon the enemy take an additional 1d3 damage the following round.

**Piercing:** ignore some/all armor.

**Parry:** when an attack is successfully made against you, if you are wielding this weapon you can choose to parry, raising your ac by 2. However, you get no action on your next round.

**Daze:** if you choose, force your opponent to make a saving throw vs. physique. if they fail, then they will not be able to do anything but move for the next round.

**Disarm:** on a successful hit, target must make a saving throw vs physique or lose whatever is in their hands.

**Trip:** target must make a saving throw versus physique or fall prone.

**Close-quarters:** +2 to to-hit in close-quarters fighting or melees with 5+ participants.

**Riposte:** when an attack hits you, make a save vs physique. If successful, you may make an attack against whatever hit you.

**Status symbol:** bonus to social interactions and reaction rolls with people who can appreciate your fine weapon.

**Camouflaged:** in most cases you can keep this weapon, even if you've been thoroughly searched and your other weapons are taken from you.

## 3. Advancement

**At each even level after first**, the player can choose a specific ability from the list of abilities under their class. **At each odd level thereafter**, the player rolls on the random leveling table of their class.

In addition, **players will gain more hit points** - simply roll the hit die and add the result to your current number.

Make sure to look at your class document for any other possible changes upon advancement.

You may also choose to take on a level in another class. You will use their hit die for the next level, and do not get the starting equipment for anything besides your starting class.

### 3.1 getting experience

There are two experience mechanics for this system; choose whichever fits your play-style best.

#### Heroic Experience

Under this mechanic, players gain 1 experience point for the following reasons:

- securing a load of treasure.
- gaining a valuable contact.
- protecting someone from injustice/danger.
- other events, as determined by the referee.

## XP for Silver

If you choose this mechanic, players gain 1 experience point per piece of silver value they have safely sequestered or invested. Multiply the XP requirements in the above table by 1000 to get the silver leveling requirements.

Level	Heroic Thresholds	Silver Thresholds
2	6	6,000
3	12	12,000
4	24	24,000
5	48	48,000
6	96	96,000
7	192	192,000

A character may choose to retire once they have reached level seven. Though they can choose to continue adventuring, they will gain no more abilities

from their class. However, adventurers of this caliber often go on to explore greater things, like running nations or armies.

## 4. Adventuring

### 4.1 Healing

ACTION	HP REGAINED
1 night's sleep	+ 1 HD of HP
1 entire day spent resting in the wilderness	+ 2 HD of HP
Extended stay in town of 3 or more days	Back to full HP

### 4.2 Combat

#### Ground Rules

- ◆ Attack rolls are 1d20 - attack bonus. If this is equal to or under the armor rating of the opponent then it is successful, so roll for damage.
- ◆ Every individual in combat gets **two actions**. If both actions are used to attack, one of the attacks is rolled with disadvantage. Otherwise, actions can be spent however the player likes between movement and combat. In addition, combatants have a free



action, which could be throwing an item, drawing an item from their belt, yelling to a team-mate, or something similar.

- ◆ Spells take two actions to perform.
- ◆ The base speed is 30ft per move action.
- ◆ Players (and enemies) may declare a called shot ("I'd like to shoot the sun-stone in his hand.") On a **master stroke** (a roll of a natural 1 or 2), it happens. If it's not a master stroke but is otherwise a hit, the opponent has the opportunity to allow it to happen, or take the damage.

## Combat Order

1. First, check to see who (if anyone) is surprised. Any participant who **may** be surprised rolls 1d6. If the result is a 5 or a 6, then they are surprised and cannot act first.
2. Roll initiative. This is 1d6 for each side, the side that rolled lowest going first. In the case of a tie, the players move first.
3. The side that moves first determines as a group what actions are being performed and these are resolved by the referee.

## Special Cases

**Aim:** One can spend an entire round to aim a ranged attack, giving advantage on attack rolls.

**Firing into melee:** With a successful ranged hit, there's no chance of hitting your allies. **However, should you miss then there is a 50% chance of hitting an ally.** Determine who is hit by rolling the first die larger than the number of combatants and counting from left to right in the view of the archer. If the rolled number is larger than the number of combatants, then it's a miss - be careful next time, that was close!

**Mounted combat:** Mounted characters get a -1 armor rating bonus while fighting enemies on foot, but suffer disadvantage on ranged attacks unless they have prior experience or skill in mounted combat.

## 4.3 Death and Dying

When a character reaches 0 hit points, they must roll on the Death and Dismemberment Table.

2d6 roll	Effect
2	Greivous Wound - instant death.
3	Fatal Wound - dies in 1d6 rounds.
4	Crippled, will die in 3d6 rounds unless action is taken.
5,6,7,8	Incapable of adventuring until after the next full night's sleep.
9	Knocked out for 2d6 rounds.
10	Stunned for one round.

11	no permanent effect.
12	Adrenaline - regain 1d4 hp for every two levels. After combat hit points leave and the character faints for 2d6 adventuring turns.

## 5. Magic

### 5.1 Corruption

Corruption is the accumulated stress sorcerers undergo in order to make reality bend to their will. Every sorcerer is released from it in the early morning hours, as the moon sits at its highest in the heavens.

The corruption cost of a spell is the number of d6 worth of corruption you must take on in order to cast the spell. If your corruption total becomes greater than your Thought while casting a spell, the spell succeeds but you must roll on the table of Aberrations and Abominations. After rolling on that table your corruption returns to 0.

Corruption can be taken by any character — it may be caused by cursed items or magical opponents.

2d6 roll	Effect
2	You can survive only on the blood of sentient beings. You must feed once a week.
3	animate item-shape. You retain all of your spells.
4	random animal-form. You retain all of your spells.
5	Shrinks 50%-99%. If you shrink 100%, then come back as a giant.
6,7,8	The spell you just cast now has a 50% chance of costing double corruption each time you cast it.
9	No face, only skull. Increase your chances to intimidate by 1 in 6.
10	One of your hands withers and shrinks. It also twitches in some long-forgotten sign language. You don't know what it is saying.
11	You glow in the presence of evil. This makes it hard to sneak, but you now work as an alarm system.
12	Your eyes have adjusted to the light of the unseen realm. You can see in the dark.

inside back cover reference

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