



Conan!

E. Gary Gygax©

The Schick-Moldvay treatments of fictional characters from heroic fantasy and swords & sorcery have interested quite a number of adventure gaming enthusiasts, including this one. Having picked up a batch of new "Conan" books recently, I could not resist rating this "Giant in the Earth" in the same manner (or nearly so anyway) that Messrs. Schick and Moldvay have treated like characters.

Please be aware, gentle reader, that this rating is strictly subjective and done to the best of my current recollection; I have not gone back through all of the "Conan" books and re-read them to prove my accuracy. Nonetheless, I feel that the parameters are correct, and I hope you will be satisfied after reading them. Please let me know if you detect any *glaring* errors—and notice I emphasize the word *glaring*; I don't particularly care if you rate him as a 14th-level Thief or a 22nd-level Fighter, for there is no profit in quibbling over this sort of detail. For example, if Conan used a sling with skill in a story, and I have, in fact,

omitted this weapon from the list of those he uses with proficiency, that is a *glaring* error! Read on and enjoy!

Notes Regarding Ability Statistics:

Strength shown indicates Conan's development from early manhood through old age. The transitions are, of course, gradual over the years shown.

Intelligence shown is that developed and used, the figure in parentheses is the potential, and until later life it was used only insofar as linguistic ability was concerned.

Dexterity is indicated at a peak during the earlier years when Conan exercised his thieving ability more frequently.

Constitution shown reflects only additional hit points; see also the section hereafter dealing with *Saving Throws*.

Charisma, being a reflection of personality and other factors in addition to physical appearance, often shows two ratings: The first of a dual rating is Conan's charisma effect upon males, the second shows his effect upon females. All ability statistics are based on the assumption that Conan was a prime example of the physically and mentally superior individual, maturing late, retaining peak form for a long period, and living longer than average as well. (Although REH never said anything about Conan's lifespan, I can not conceive of it being under a minimum of 100 years—barring something untimely, shall we say . . .)

Fighting Ability: The skill levels shown are matched, more or less, to the adventures Conan had during the period. He gained expertise more slowly between 20 and 30 years of age because of his practice in thievery at that time. The drop-off in level in later years is meant to reflect the effects of advancing age, and while hit points might drop off more, skill level would not drop below 9th level—say until 100 years of age, perhaps, and possibly not even then.

Weapons Proficiency: Conan's weapons are:

UP TO AGE 20 —axe, battle; axe, hand; dagger; spear; sword, long
 20 TO 24 —add bow, long; sword, broad
 25 TO 29 —add bow, composite; scimitar
 30 TO 39 —add javelin; sword, short
 40 & after —add flail; lance; mace

Thieving Ability: Conan has the *climbing* and *moving silently* abilities of a 10th-level Thief at age 15. As soon as he attains 1st level of thieving ability, the *climbing* ability increases by 1 level (to 11th) and so on until attaining 17th level of climbing ability (at 7th level of thieving ability); this skill is never lost. Conan's penchant for fighting and weapons prevents him from *picking pockets* and *opening* locks. His high dexterity gives him +10% *additional* bonus per point of dexterity over 18, however, for *moving silently* and *hiding in shadows*. (See *Special Abilities* notes below for additional details.)

Armor Class: Until his later years, Conan scorned body armor and shield most of the time. However, in battle or perilous situations where protection was available, he would usually don some simple protection

Conan At Age —

	15	20	25	30	40	50	60	70
Strength	18/76	18/91	18/00	19	18/00	18/91	18/51	18/01
Intelligence	12(18)	14(18)	15(18)	16(18)	17(18)	18	18	18
Wisdom	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Dexterity	18	19	20	19	19	18	17	16
Constitution	18	18	18	18	18	17	16	15
Charisma	15	15/16	15/18	16/18	18	18	17	17
Fighter Level	4	8	12	16	24	20	16	12
Thief Level	—	4	8	12	12	12	10	8
AC-Bonus	+4	+5	+6	+5	+5	+4	+3	+2
Move Base	18”	21”	21”	21”	18”	15”	15”	12”
Hit Points	52	108	132	143	167	144	123	104
No. of Att.	3/2	2/1	5/2	3/1	3/1	5/2	2/1	3/2
Damage/Att.	+4	+5	+6	+7	+6	+5	+3	+3
Spec. Att.	See Below							
Spec. Def.	See Below							
Magic Resist.	See Below							
Alignment	Chaotic Neutral (towards good)—				Chaotic Good (neutral leanings at times)			
Psionics	Latent: <i>Animal telepathy</i> , <i>detection of magic</i> , <i>precognition</i> , <i>mind bar</i>							

such as leather armor or a chainmail shirt. Conan would wear "Elfin Chain," but he would scorn wearing magic armor. In his Aquilonian period, Conan certainly wears full plate armor and uses a shield as well.

Number of Attacks: Conan's native ability and barbarian upbringing give him a great edge in combat, and this is reflected in the number of attacks per round he receives. He will always attack first in a melee round, and, if applicable, at the mid-point and end of the round as well.

Damage Per Attack: In addition to the damage shown (the standard strength bonus), Conan's swordsmanship enables him to wield a sword as if it were magic, even though he never willingly uses a magic sword. Below 8th level, the sword is treated as +1 for bonuses to hit and damage, from 8th to 12th levels it is treated as +2, and at 13th and above it is treated as +3. (This includes ability to hit those creatures subject only to magic weapons.) See also Special Attacks below.

Special Attacks: Gaining experience rapidly, Conan becomes a deadly opponent—well beyond the average Fighter of the same level. Therefore, if he scores a hit which totals 21 or better after adjustment, he scores double weapon damage. Note that this does not apply to a blow struck from behind (which is unlikely for Conan, of course). Also, due to his early training and experience, Conan is able to hide so as to be 75% undetectable in underbrush or woodlands. Indoors or in the dungeon or similar setting he operates as a 4th-level Thief, even before becoming one, with respect to *hiding* in shadows. (See Thieving Ability above.) Due to all of this, Conan will surprise *opponents 50% of the time*, when such determination is necessary.

Special Defenses: There is only a 1 in 20 chance (50%) that Conan will be *surprised*, even by creatures normally having a much higher probability for surprise (see Psionics below). Conan's *saving throws* are always made at +4 on the die, and poison can not kill him, even if he fails the saving throw—he will take damage to within 1 hit point of death and fall unconscious. Finally, Conan regains *hit points* at twice the normal rate, with 10 hit points being recovered after a single day of rest. He is also able to regain lost hit points without rest, but he does so only at the normal rate, not double normal with a first-day bonus.

Magic Resistance: See *Special Defenses* above and *Psionics* below. If Conan is aware of magic being used against him, he gains a 25% magic resistance. He will always move to slay the foul mage daring to try such witchery against him!

Psionics: All of Conan's psionic abilities are latent. He does not understand he has them, and he never consciously attempts to use them. They only operate in stress situations or when he is in danger. *Animal telepathy* operates at 14th level of mastery, but it actually allows Conan to at best sense the emotions of the creature concerned, so it is more an *empathy*. He can, in turn, send his own emotions back to the creature 50% of the time. *Detection of magic* does not determine the type of spell. *Precognition* operates only in a "sixth sense" feeling of unease when something threatens Conan's life or freedom. *Mind bar* functions only against spell attacks. He can not be attacked psionically, as the talent is latent. Conan can not expend more than 30 psionic strength points per day.

Special Abilities: Besides those noted heretofore, Conan has the special ability of being able to fight equally well with either hand. He seldom uses two weapons at once, but if he does, this does *not* increase the number of attacks per round; it simply allows him to parry one opponent attack per round. It does not reduce his attacks per round. Conan can move at a trot all day long without becoming tired. In woodlands, Conan is able to conceal his trail so that it is 75% undetectable to the average woodsman (use 50% of normal Ranger chance and adjust accordingly). His vision and hearing are 50% above normal.

Secondary Skills: Hunter/fisher (at age 15); navigator (after age 25), sailor (after age 20); shipwright, boats (after age 25); teamster (after age 20). Conan can also determine the relative worth of any weapon by age 20 and the relative value of gems and jewelry by age 25.

Pummeling, Grappling, et al.: Conan always gets a score of 6 on his *variable die*. Other differences are:

Pummeling: Conan's power and ability are such that any opponent is treated as *slowed* and a 10% bonus is always applicable. Conan's fist is treated as *mailed* when bare, as a *metal pommel* when mailed or using a wooden butt, and if actually using a metal pommel, he receives a 15% bonus. Conan can choose to make his pummeling attacks cause full damage.

Grappling: Bonuses for *slowed* do not apply here, unless the condition actually exists. Treat Conan's effective height as 7', and his *effective* weight as 350#. When at 19 strength, he receives a 10% strength addition. All grappling damage scored on the opponent is normal damage.

Overbearing: Conan is always considered to be *rushing leaping to attack* (15% bonus). At 19 strength level the 10% additional strength bonus applies. *Effective* height and weight are the same as for grappling. All overbearing damage scores is normal.

Weaponless Combat: Conan may elect to attack any opponent with his bare hands. Hits are scored as if he were attacking with a club, and damage is likewise determined, adding the appropriate strength bonus to each successful hit in any given round. In such cases, there is no option as to whether damage stuns or is normal.

I do not recommend that you rush to include Conan in your campaign for whatever reason—except, perhaps, to slay one or two brash characters who are too far out of line to accept gentle reproof. NPCs such as this are nice, though, for occasional encounters and as "heavy artillery" in case of extraordinary need.

As a word of further caution, remember that Conan will surely be greatly displeased if anything should happen to his star pupil, and then perhaps a Conan from a parallel world would have to be brought into yours-for real. (If you can swallow that, you probably play D&D!)

The hardcore Robert E. Howard buffs will probably blast me for saying this, but the new series of Conan books (Bantam) is well worth reading. The books are *not* REH, but they have sufficient flavor to be "Conan stories." After all, we all have slightly different personalities at times—as Conan does in these works. There are at least four titles available now, all prominently displaying the name, CONAN, in bold letters, so you can't miss them. Seeing as how I had to buy my copies, I won't give their titles and so on (if Bantam wants reviews in *The Dragon* they can ship freebies to us!).

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