

EZFudge Dungeon Crawl

v 0.4

EZFudge Fantasy World Book by Lawrence Parrish
Adapted from Fudge Dungeon Crawl by Tim Huntley

Introduction

Remember the days when a night of good RPG fun meant sitting around in a tavern until you were approached by a strange old man who needed the monsters cleared out of the dungeon just outside of town? Or, when the highlight of the game was defeating the dragon who claimed the 15th level of the dungeon as his lair?

Well, those days are back! Welcome to EZFudge Dungeon Crawl!

To use this World Book, you will need a copy of EZFudge. The rules (and other goodies) may be found at the fudgecommunity Yahoo Fudge Group at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/fudgecommunity/info>.

About Fudge

Fudge is a role-playing game written by Steffan O'Sullivan, with extensive input from the Usenet community of rec.games.design. The basic rules of FUDGE are available on the internet via anonymous ftp at oz.plymouth.edu, and in book form or on disk from Grey Ghost Press, Inc., P.O. Box 838, Randolph, MA 02368.

They may be used with any gaming genre. While an individual work derived from FUDGE may specify certain attributes and skills, many more are possible with FUDGE. Every Game Master using FUDGE is encouraged to add or ignore any character traits. Anyone who wishes to distribute such material for free may do so — merely include this ABOUT FUDGE notice and disclaimer (complete with FUDGE copyright notice). If you wish to charge a fee for such material, other than as an article in a magazine or other periodical, you must first obtain a royalty-free license from the author of FUDGE, Steffan O'Sullivan, P.O. Box 465, Plymouth, NH 03264. You must include at the beginning of each derivative work the following disclaimer, completed with your name, in its entirety.

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Characters

To create a character, choose a race and occupation below. Add gifts, faults and skills to complete your character.

Races

Pick one of the races below or create one of your own.

Human: Humans are the base race from which all others are compared. Therefore, humans have no additional bonuses or penalties. Humans receive two free attribute levels, two free gifts and ten skill points.

Dwarf: Dwarves are short, stout demi-humans with full beards and little to no sense of humor. Dwarves have the Gifts Darkvision, Resist Poison, Resist Magic and Detect Passage. Dwarves gain +1 Body and have the Fault Elf Animosity. Dwarves begin with eight skill points.

Elf: Elves are lithe demi-humans with beautiful features and pointed ears. Elves have the Gifts of Low-light Vision, Long Sword Proficiency, Long Bow Proficiency and Detect Hidden Doors. Elven characters gain +1 Agility and have the Fault Dwarf Animosity. Elves begin with eight skill points.

Halfling: Halflings are small, good-natured demi-humans who tend to get along with everyone. Due to their small stature, Halfling characters have the Sneaky Gift. They also have Resist Magic and Small Missile Proficiency. Halfling characters receive +1 Agility, but suffer a -1 penalty to Body. Halfling begin play with ten skill points.

Occupations

Characters should choose one of the following occupations (aka class). Characters may have a second occupation (aka dual-class) if they like, for one gift. Humans are more versatile than the other races and may learn up to three occupations (multi-class).

Fighter: All weapon skills default to Fair. A Fighter can wear any armor and use any shield.

Mage: Mages automatically possess the Magery: Magic Gift, after many years of study. Weapon skills for a Mage default to Terrible (-3) as they spend most of their time honing their arcane arts, not training with weapons. If a Mage is wearing armor or carrying a shield when casting a spell, it will automatically fail (as any armor beyond light cloth or leather interferes with casting). Mages may begin play knowing four magic spells, chosen from the list in the Magic section.

Cleric: Clerics automatically possess the Magery: Cleric Gift. Due to their strict beliefs, Clerics may only use non-edged weapons. A Cleric can wear any armor and use any type of shield. A Cleric can cast spells, chosen from the list in the Magic section, and can "turn," or rebuke, undead creatures with a situational roll of at least Great.

Thief: A Thief can wear any light armor (cannot use thieving skills if wearing armor heavier than leather). Thieves gain Pick Pockets, Open Locks, Find/Remove Traps, and Stealth skills at Fair.

Skills

Apothecary: modern era healer

Armorer: able to make armor, given proper tools and material

Barkeep: knowledge of drinks and proper sanitation of beer mugs

Bard: singer and rhymer

Brawling: ability to use hands, feet, knees, teeth, etc., to the best ability

Carpentry: woodworking

Find/Remove Traps: locating and disarming traps and booby traps

Navigation: ability to properly navigate from one place to another

Open Locks: unlocking items if the proper tools are available

Pick Pockets: taking things off of others without their knowledge

Spellcraft: this skill is used to successfully cast a Mage or Cleric spell, one for each spell

Stealth: moving unseen and unheard

Tracking: following a target without seeing them, by using the land

Weapon: a basic class of weapon, such as sword, hammer, bow or sling

Weaponsmith: ability to make weapons, given the proper tools and material

Gifts

Absolute Direction: always knows what direction they are facing

Ambidexterity: can use either hand without normal penalty of -2

Charisma: gains +1 reaction when dealing with non-player characters

Darkvision: can see in dark normally, but not in color

Detect Hidden Doors: +2 bonus to detect any secret or concealed door

Detect Passage: +2 to detect slanting passages, traps, shifting walls, new underground construction

Infravision: ability to see at night by detecting heat sources

Low-light Vision: can see normally in moonlight, torchlight or starlight and in color

Magery: Cleric: the ability to cast Cleric spells

Magery: Mage: the ability to cast Mage spells

Pain Tolerance: does not suffer wound penalties for Hurt or Very Hurt and can resist torture

Resist Magic: +2 to resist magic

Poison Resistance: +2 to resist poisons

Sneaky: can gain surprise on a situational roll of Great or better

Toughness: general toughness resulting in +2 DF

Weapon Proficiency: pick one weapon that ignores one minus result when rolling to attack

Faults

Animosity: generally do not get along well with another race or common object

Code of Conduct: vow or way of life, such as not using edged weapons or harming the innocent

Forgetful: hard to remember things, like packing rations, or putting arrows in the quiver

Fragile: character is frail, modifying damage values by +2

Greed: great lust for wealth and treasure

Impulsive: acts without thinking

Overconfidence: character feels they are more skilled and armed than opponent or situation

Magic

Mages and Clerics can both use Magic. For Mages, it is their constant study of formulae and arcane texts that give them the power to affect reality. Clerics exercise their magic ability by working miracles.

A Mage character starts play with a spell book containing the player's choice of four of the Mage spells listed below at Mediocre, but they may be improved with skill points normally. A Mage with enough preparatory time can create scrolls containing a spell in their spell book, so that when the scroll is read aloud, the spell is cast. Casting a spell from a scroll destroys it in the process. Casting a spell from a scroll takes twice as long as casting it from memory. New spells default to Non-Existent, meaning a Mage must purchase new spells with experience.

A Cleric can cast spells from the Cleric spells listed below. While a Cleric has access to all Cleric spells at any time, each skill defaults to Mediocre. It would be very beneficial for the Cleric to specialize in a few spells that would be used most of the time. Each morning, the Cleric prays and petitions for spells. If the Cleric is prevented from praying, no spells will be available. Unlike the Mage, all spells are available and the Cleric may simply choose which one to cast.

Each spell cast in same a day becomes more difficult. Each spell cast after the first incurs a -1 penalty.

A character must have Magery (or Magery 0) to cast spells. Magery may be taken more than one time, adding a level for each gift. Taking Magery once (for one gift) the character has Magery or Magery 0. Spending two gifts will result in having Magery 1, three gifts for Magery 2, and so on.

A character with Magery 1 and above may cast an additional spell each day without penalty, for each level in Magery. For example, a character with Magery 2 has purchased the gift three times and may cast three spells in a day before incurring a penalty; the fourth spell cast that day will have a -1 penalty.

Casting a spell is like using any other skill, but Magery modifies the roll. For example, a magic-user with Magery 1 and Mystic Bolt at Great would roll $4dF + 3$ (+1 for Magery and +2 for skill) to determine success.

$$\text{Action Result} = 4dF + \text{Magery} + \text{Skill}$$

Unless stated otherwise, spells take one combat round to cast and last $(6 + \text{Action Result})$ combat rounds. Resisting a spell is done by passing an Opposed check versus the magic-users' action result.

Mage Spells

Cast Illusions: Creates an illusion in an area no bigger than a 30' diameter. The illusions created by this spell disappear when touched.

Charm: The target of this spell will be completely under the influence of the Mage unless passes an Opposed Mind check.

Create Light: This spell lights a circular area with an approximate 30' diameter. If cast on an item, that item can be carried and the light will move with it.

Invisibility: This spell will render the Mage (or another target chosen by the Mage) completely invisible.

Levitate: This spell allows the Mage to move up or down in the air without any support.

Mage Wagon: This spell creates an invisible disk floating at the Mage's waist height that can carry about 500 pounds of stuff. The disk will follow the Mage as he or she walks around.

Mystic Armor: This spell encircles the Mage with a protective barrier, providing +4 DF vs. ranged attacks and +2 DF vs. melee attacks.

Mystic Bolt: This spell launches a missile of glowing magical energy at a target chosen by the Mage with OF +4.

Protection from Monsters: A spell that encircles the Mage with a protective barrier that gives +2 DF).

Read Languages: This spell allows the Mage to read (but not speak) any language.

See Invisible: This spell allows the Mage to detect any object cloaked with an Invisibility spell in his or her immediate vicinity.

Sense Magic: This spell will alert the Mage if a spell has been cast on a person, place, or thing in his or her immediate vicinity.

Sleep: This spell puts 4 + 4dF creatures chosen by the caster to sleep unless the targets pass an Opposed Mind check.

Ventriloquism: This spell allows the Mage to cause his or her voice to come from somewhere else.

Wizard's Key: This spell cancels a Hold Portal spell.

Wizard's Lock: This spell magically holds a door shut.

Cleric Spells

Calming Touch: This spell calms the recipient and remove all fear.

Create Light: As per the Mage spell of the same name.

Healing Hands: The Cleric immediately heals wounds as if the target received medical attention at a level equal to the action result. A Fair result heals all Scratches while a Good result heals all Wounds one level.

Holy Warmth: This spell allows the recipient to ignore the effects of cold.

Protection from Evil: This spell encircles the Cleric with a protective barrier that grants the Mage +2 DF vs. inherently evil people or monsters.

Purify: This spell will make poisoned water and food usable.

Sense Evil: This spell allows the cleric to detect any inherently evil person or creature in his or her immediate vicinity.

Sense Magic: As per the Mage spell of the same name.

Equipment

It is assumed at the start of any EZFudge Dungeon Crawl game that the characters are already in possession of their equipment. Players should equip their characters using items from the following list, pursuant to their occupation. Some examples follow.

Fighter: leather armor, shield, sword or axe

Mage: robes, staff, spell book

Cleric: leather armor, war hammer, holy symbol

Thief: leather armor, normal sword, thieves' tools

If characters would like to purchase their own items, each beginning character starts with 10 x (4dF+10) gold pieces.

All coins are about the same size and shape, about the size of a US half dollar. The value and exchange rate of the various coins are below:

10 copper pieces (cp) = 1 silver piece
 10 silver pieces (sp) = 1 gold piece
 5 gold pieces (gp) = 1 platinum piece (pp)

100 cp = 10 sp = 1gp = 1/5 pp

Weapon	OF	Cost	Weapon	OF	Cost
Battle Axe (two-handed)	4	7	Pole arm	2	7
Club	2	3	Short Bow	2	25
Crossbow	2	30	Short Sword	2	7
Dagger	1	3	Sling	2	2
Hand Axe	2	4	Spear	2	3
Long Bow	2	40	Sword	3	10
Long Sword	3	12	Sword, two-handed	4	15
Mace	3	5	War Hammer	4	5

Bows come equipped with 20 arrows, Crossbows with 30 quarrels and Slings with 30 stones.

Armor	DF	Cost	Armor	DF	Cost
Robes	+0	5	Chain mail	+3	40
Thick furs	+1	10	Plate mail	+4	60
Leather	+1	20	Shield	+1	10
Studded Leather	+2	30			

Item	Cost	Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Backpack	5	Hand-sized mirror	5	Tinder box	3
Flask of oil	2	Rations, 1 week	5	Torches	1
Small hammer	2	20 Arrows or Quarrels	5	Waterskin	1
Holy symbol	25	50' rope	1	Wine	1
Vial of holy water	25	Small sack	1	Wolfsbane	10
12 iron spikes	1	Large sack	2	10' wooden pole	1
Lantern	10	Thieves' tools	25	30 stones	1

Monsters

Most dungeons are home to several different types of monsters. These are the most common. Unless noted otherwise, all monsters have attributes of Fair for determination of attack and defense rolls.

Giant Lizard: Five foot long nocturnal reptiles, giant lizards hunt by climbing steep walls with their specially adapted feed, and dropping on their prey to attack. Their scaled skin gives them DF +2, and OF +4 bite.

Giant Snake: Another reptile about five foot in length, the main difference between the giant snake and the giant lizard is the lack of legs and a poisonous bite. Giant snakes have scaled skin which provides DF +2, and OF +2 bite, which injects a paralyzing poison. The victim must make a Great Body roll or be completely paralyzed for 24 hours.

Giant Spider: Giant spiders are meat-eaters that attack their victims by clinging to walls or ceilings and dropping onto them. When hidden in dark ceilings, the only signs of their presence are the collections of webs and cocooned prey. Giant spiders have tough skin which provides DF +1 and OF +2 bite. Any successful giant spider bite carries a weak poison and the character must make a Mediocre Body roll or die within 24 hours.

Goblin: Small and incredibly ugly, goblins are humanoids with chalky tan or grey skin, and eyes that glow red in the dark. Goblins can see in the dark as can dwarves and elves, using infravision. Goblins usually wear leather armor (DF +1) and wield short swords (OF +2).

Green Slime: Green slime looks, strangely enough, like green, oozing slime. They can only be damaged by fire or cold. It dissolves wood and metal, and turns flesh into more green slime. The only cure is to burn the green slime off and cauterize the wounds it creates.

Kobold: Kobolds are small, evil dog-men with scaly, rust-brown skin and no hair. As with goblins, they have well-developed infravision which allows them to see in the dark. Kobolds usually wear no armor and wield small clubs (OF +1) or small spears (OF +1). The typical Kobold will have Mediocre weapon skills, while their Chieftain will have Good skills or better.

Orc: Orcs are ugly humanoids that look like a combination of animals and men. Thoroughly evil, they usually kill everything they meet, except for goblins who they frequently enslave. Orcs are commonly found wearing leather armor and carrying shields (OF +2). They use just about any weapon they can find.

Zombie : The undead and reanimated body of an previous adventurer who died in the dungeon and was left by his companions, never to have a proper burial. Generally mindless and slow, zombies hate the living and will attack them on site. Their rotting flesh is easy to damage, having no additional DF, but zombies are not "dead" until their brains are destroyed requiring decapitation, a mace to the noggin doing at least a Very Hurt result, etc. Zombies strike with their bludgeoning fists, OF +2.

Treasure

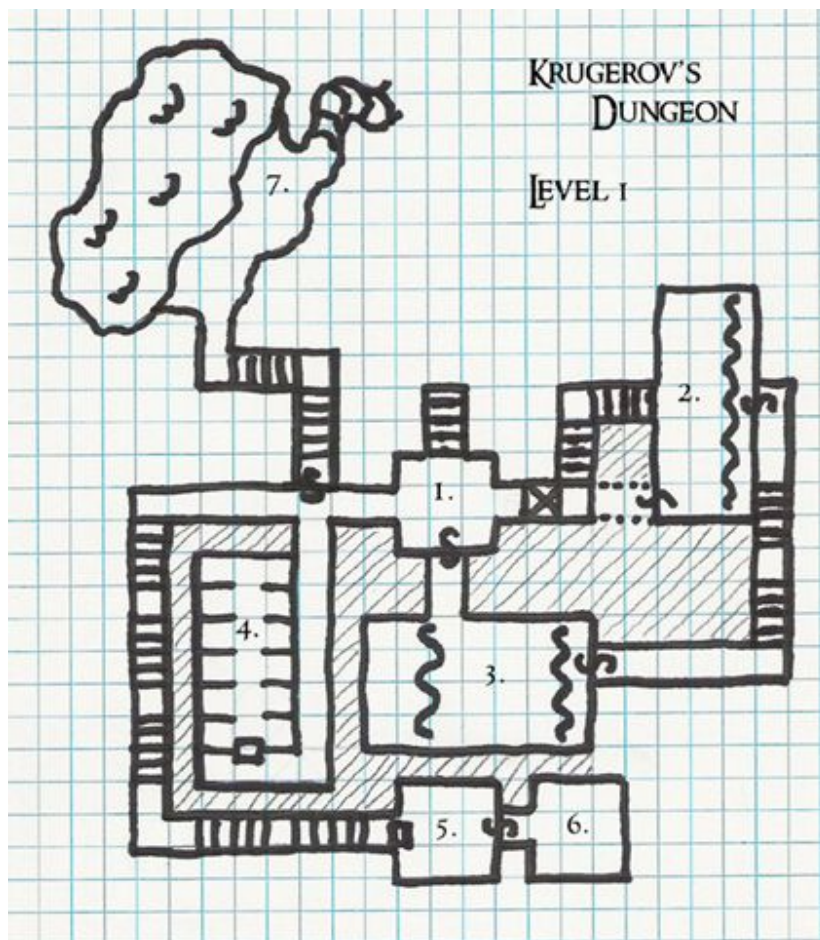
What is a good dungeon crawl without treasure? Most monsters (even unintelligent ones like zombies and giant snakes) will be guarding treasure chests containing hundreds of gold or silver coins or the occasional gemstone. Sometimes the chests are locked or trapped, requiring a thief character to use his or her Open Locks and Find/Remove Traps skills.

The greatest treasures, however, are magic items -- weapons that ignore one or more minuses ("-") on the attack rolls, armor or shields that ignore one or more minuses on the defense rolls, scrolls with new spells for Mages, enchanted rings or necklaces that provide additional DF or can cast the Shield spell at will, bracers that provide additional Body or Agility (or ignore one or more minuses on Body or Agility rolls), etc.

Krugerov's Dungeon

A sample dungeon for Fudge Dungeon Crawl

As the characters are adventuring in a distant land, they hear the tale of an evil warlord named Krugerov who ruled with an iron fist until his subjects rebelled against him and razed his castle to the ground, killing him and his wizard advisor in the process. Rumors of vast dungeons filled with treasure assault their adventurous ears, and it is because of those rumors that we find the characters standing amidst the ruins of Castle Krugerov, staring down a foreboding set of stairs leading down into the ground.



Key to the map

One square on the map equals approximately 10 feet. North points towards the top of the map.

1. As the characters descend into this room, it seems to quickly swallow up the light streaming in from the top of the stairs. By the time they reach the bottom of the seemingly endless stairs, they can barely see the other side of the 30' by 30' room without using torchlight. Once a light source is established, they will notice that the room is very dirty and cluttered with chunks of rock from the destruction of the castle above. The statue of a large man stands in the

south-east corner, most likely Krugorov himself. Any character making a Good Mind check will notice that the ceiling of the room is swathed with spider webs and will not be surprised when the Giant Spider (DF +1, OF +2; Mediocre Body roll or die in 24 hours) hiding therein drops on a random character. In the middle of the south wall is a secret door leading to area #3, and just past the entry into the hallway on the east is a pit trap - the first character to step on it will fall and take damage (treat as an OF +4 attack). Please note that there is a 1' ridge between the north wall and the pit trap that the characters can use to safely bypass the pit if it is found.

2. After clearing the pit trap and walking down two flights of stairs, the characters will find themselves in what was at one time a fairly heinous torture chamber. All the implements are here - iron maidens, racks, etc. - most have rotted due to age and will collapse if jostled too much, awakening the Giant Snake (DF +2, OF +2; Great Body roll or paralyzed for 24 hours) sleeping in the iron maiden. A moldy tapestry depicting scenes of torture hangs on the east wall, hiding a secret door leading to area #3. A second secret door on the south side of the west wall leads to the bottom of the pit trap just outside of area #1.

3. The first thing the characters will notice upon entering this room is the horrible smell of rotting flesh. A dilapidated bed is against the south wall and moldy tapestries line the east and west walls. The eastern tapestry hides a secret door leading to area #2, and the western tapestry hides an alcove where a treasure chest and an armoire filled with rotting clothes can be found. As the characters approach the bed, they will notice a figure laying in it, coming to life as they approach... a zombie (DF 0, OF +2)! The treasure chest is trapped with a needle that will do one scratch of damage directly if not found -- the poison evaporated long ago. The chest contains 100 gold coins, 50 silver coins, a large ruby worth 500 gold coins, and a magic dagger. For each killing blow that the dagger lands (a "Near Death" damage result), it ignores one minus result ("-") on any following attack rolls. This effect is cumulative, but has a maximum of -4. Every morning at dawn, the dagger "resets."

4. The door to this room is unlocked, and appears to be used frequently as it swings open easily and without too much creaking. This room appears to have at one point been a prison, although the doors to all of the cells have been removed. Great Will rolls will reveal the sounds of heavy breathing or light snoring coming from the room. Evidently, a group of goblins (DF +2, OF +3) have taken up residence here, as they all wake up when the characters enter! The number of goblins in the room depends on the number and type of player-characters: there are two goblins for each fighter and one for each other type of character. The goblins have nothing of value, save their somewhat rusty short swords and their ill-maintained leather armor.

5. As the characters descend several flights of stairs, the air gets more stale and damp, before they finally come to a door which appears to be locked. A thief can pick the lock and gain access with a Good Open Locks roll, or any character can break it down with a Great Body roll. The room appears to be a wizard's laboratory, as there is a desk on the north wall and a workbench covered with dirty, slimy beakers on the south wall. Most of the beakers are covered with Green Slime! If anyone investigates the workbench they will have to make a Great Will roll to notice the quivering of the slime as they approach. A secret door on the east wall leads to area #6.

6. This appears to be a wizard's private study. The walls are lined with musty, moldy books. Most disintegrate upon being touched, but a thorough search should turn up usable scrolls of Charm and Cast Illusions.

7. As the characters open the secret door and descend the stairs leading to this area, they will be assaulted by the scent of stagnant water and dead fish. The entryway opens up into a natural cave dominated by a decent sized underwater pond. Characters who look into the pond will see skeletons strewn about, as if they had been thrown into the pool, with white, albino lobsters and crabs crawling over the bones. The north-east section of this room opens up to a natural stairway leading down into the second level of Krugorov's Dungeon, which you can create and populate yourself!

Will the players discover the legendary king and his sorcerer alive in the halls below? Or, is there some other, unseen monster, guarding their bones? That's up to you to decide as the players continue in their quest for treasure.

Appendix I: A Treasury of Magical Weapons

The following is an excerpt from the Fudge Factor article titled *A Treasury of Magical Weapons* by Mike Harvey

It's Only a +1 Sword...

Many games describe magical effects or items in terms of "plusses" to attack, damage or defense. While this is easy to quantify and requires minimal effort from the GM, it can result in very bland items that mean little to players.

New ***Fudge*** GMs and players often try to do the same thing in their ***Fudge*** games, only to discover that it can throw things way out of balance. In ***Fudge*** even a mere +1 can be very powerful. This can leave people at a loss to convert their favorite adventures or characters, and may even convince them that ***Fudge*** is hopelessly "broken."

Having cut my teeth on ***D&D***, I am personally fond of random tables and lists of things. Since this article is targeted primarily at other GMs who come from such backgrounds, I have presented it as a set of tables you can roll on or pick from.

Try the Handy Dandy Sword-o-Matic!

For an instant item, roll one or more properties from the following lists, or just pick something that looks like fun. These lists can easily be expanded by looking in your favorite FRPG... especially ***AD&D***.

(You do have a d30, don't you?)

Basic Abilities

1. Magic weapon can strike otherwise invulnerable creatures (JH)
2. Unbreakable artifact
3. Never rusts or becomes dull
4. Grants 1 Fudge Point per combat
5. Grants Great weapon skill (not useful if you are already Superb)
6. Wielder is never affected by wound penalties during a fight
7. Tiebreaker power, ties go to the wielder for one point of damage (JH)
8. Automatically parries one blow per round
9. Silvered weapon, can strike were-creatures (PM)
10. Cold iron weapon, negates magical spells & defenses
11. Glimmers in the presence of specific enemies
12. Intelligent talking weapon
13. Floats on water; handy if you can't swim!
14. Boomerang ability (when thrown)
15. Truthful weapon, wielder can see through lies and illusions
16. Shatters opposing weapon (or shield) on any "tie"
17. Grants two attacks per round; also lets wielder run quickly
18. Grants +1 armor to wielder
19. Grants the ability to see in utter darkness when wielded
20. Holy weapon: wielder must serve a god, but gains the ability to work miracles, possibly other powers. It is not wise to abuse these abilities.
21. Wielder can become invisible by spending one Fudge Point
22. Legendary blade, impresses NPCs who wish to help the wielder
23. Legendary blade, dismays certain foes, causing fear and possibly flight/surrender
24. Holy Blade, wards against evil enchanted creatures
25. Grants Legendary strength to wielder
26. Immunity to fire/acid/cold/whatever (pick ONE)
27. Grants Superb leadership
28. Exudes a palpable sense of dread (Great will to resist, causes -1 morale)
29. Cleaving: no penalty when facing multiple foes

Damage Bonus

1. Grants $+n$ advantages; each advantage negates one '-' die (MW)
2. Grants $+n$ bonus dice; each bonus die ignores '-' results (B)
3. Grants $+n$ re-rolled dice (MW)
4. Roll n dice, count only the highest four (E)
5. Has a 1/6 chance to do one bonus point of damage (MW)
6. Grants flat +1 bonus (this is a very rare and powerful weapon)
7. Cleaves through armor like butter.
8. Makes solid blows, all grazes are treated as wounds (JH)
9. Flaming, double damage versus "cold" creatures; also useful as a torch, or for lighting fires
10. Frosty, double damage versus "hot" creatures, grants wielder immunity to temperature extremes
11. Destiny, weapon will **slay** one specific creature with a single strike, but after that becomes non-magical
12. Drinks souls, each five points of damage dealt grants the wielder one Fudge Point
13. Bane, any of the above damage types, but only against a specific class of creatures
14. Scale-piercing, ignore Scale difference, wonderful against dragons and giants
15. Delivers painful wounds, wound penalties are doubled
16. Any natural roll of +4 automatically severs a limb
17. The weapon finds a "chink" in armor and bypasses it on any relative degree of +2 or better.
18. Sunblade, weapon glows so brightly it causes permanent blindness to foes. If they avert their gaze, wielder may strike unopposed at difficulty Poor. Wielder is immune to the light and can see normally.
19. Might, wielder gains +2 scale for the duration of the fight.
20. Peacemaker, weapon causes loss of consciousness on any successful strike (even if it does no damage) as if incapacitated. Unconsciousness lasts one round, plus a number of rounds equal to the relative degree of the hit.
21. Hammering weapon, stuns foes for one round, they can defend but not attack
22. Darkenblade, wounds inflicted never heal
23. Holy blade, double strength bonus against evil enchanted creatures
24. Inflicts disease on any Superb strike (resisted by Health)

Curses

1. Always appears in your hand in a fight, whether you want it or not
2. Constantly sings or murmurs to itself
3. Forces the wielder into battle (Great Will roll to resist)
4. Drives wielder berserk in battle (Great Will roll to resist)
5. Causes hostile reactions in potential foes
6. Destined to betray wielder at inopportune moment
7. Backbiter, on any naturally rolled result of Terrible or worse, weapon strikes wielder with relative degree +2
8. Causes bad luck in non-combat activities
9. Weapon is watched by powerful evil entities
10. Weapon is the "focus" for some evil god, who demands service
11. Weapon has an evil reputation, causing distrust
12. Weapon turns wielder into undead, very slowly
13. Frost weapon, causes wielder to be uncomfortable in warm weather
14. Once taken up, cannot be sheathed until it draws blood
15. Weapon drinks blood, no game effect other than to horrify any onlookers. Bonus: it is self-cleaning.
16. Practical joker weapon sometimes makes embarrassing comments, like "Help, I've been stolen!" or "You're ugly, and stink too."
17. Weapon powers are unreliable, and sometimes they do not function
18. Special powers only work for one hour after weapon has tasted blood, or for one day after killing someone
19. Weapon is very heavy, requiring Great strength to wield (and reducing damage bonus from strength by two points)
20. Weapon is absurdly decorated in gold and jewels, and it seems like people are constantly trying to steal it

21. Owner attracts the attention of members of the opposite sex only when unwanted, but never when desired
22. Weapon merges with the wielder's hand and can never be removed without severing the member
23. Very powerful weapon leaves wielder weak and fainting after being used
24. Destined to slay wielder's beloved
25. Grants wielder an undesired or embarrassing skill at Legendary
26. Wielder takes on appearance of weapon's infamous creator and is fated to fulfill the same destiny; is mistaken by everyone for the original, and even magical creatures are fooled by it
27. Wielder afflicted by seemingly unrelated events; random nosebleeds, attacked by chipmunks, etc.
28. Wielder becomes vulnerable to silver, cold iron, asthma, etc
29. Wielder has -1 on all spell resistance rolls
30. Dancing weapon, forces wielder to dance

Credits

B - Bill E - Eppy JH - Johann Hibschan MW - Mitch Williams PM - Peter Mikelsons

Using a method like this virtually guarantees that no two weapons are alike, so each one should be a rare treasure. Very powerful weapons can be balanced by severe curses. But minor weapons can still be interesting: a magic sword which detects lies and illusions and which glimmers in the presence of enemies is still very useful, especially if that's the only magic weapon the party owns. Also weapons are more interesting if each one follows a "theme" and has assorted minor powers that fit that theme.

Conversion Tips

If you are converting an existing item, the first question to ask is "why am I converting this?" If it is something in a module, consider just tossing it out and creating an entirely new replacement. If an item already has a history in the campaign however, you may need to convert it.

Often in a game supplement, a magic item will have a grandiose name, a cool picture, a vivid history... and then note lamely that, "this is a +2 sword," or, "a staff of striking." In other words, the mechanics often don't fit the description. So toss the mechanics that were a kludge in the first place, go back to the original description and devise something unique and cool. This is **Fudge**; you are limited only by your imagination. For that matter you may not even need mechanics, just take the plain text description and picture and use that. Undefined and mysterious magic is by far the most intriguing.

For arms and armor, consider how it is used: does the character use it primarily for offense, for defense? Does he use some abilities and ignore others? Does he have a reputation for rolling well or poorly when using it? Does the item tend to play a major decisive role in the game, or is it just another tool? What you want to do is capture the flavor of the item. Give it powers that reflect how it is actually used, and how much difference it makes. A +4 sword sounds powerful, unless the warrior already has +17 in bonuses from other sources, in which case it is almost negligible.

Also consider how the rest of the campaign is converted. How do character abilities and enemies compare to the originals? Have you rebalanced the campaign in any way? Be sure to rebalance any items in the same degree, otherwise a strict power-for-power conversion may be unbalancing.

Finally, in some games characters carry a virtual arsenal of generic, nameless, and often expendable magic items. Consider "thinning" the arsenal to a handful of the most salient items. What is it that identifies the character? That is what you want to focus on.

Once you have decided what to discard and what to keep, and how much it needs to be rebalanced, give it a name, a history, a reputation, a theme, some quirks. Do this before doing any conversion. It needn't be elaborate, a paragraph is fine, but each item should have its own unique personality. Now, keeping in mind the character who wields it, the general power level, how it is used, and the theme/history, give it unique powers that support and reinforce each of these. And as a final touch, throw in a quirk or two, something very minor that doesn't affect combat balance, but that makes it even more unique.

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