

Zwerchhau



A simple OSR inspired TTRPG with a focus on combat

- Simplicity, traits inspired by Oz Browning's OZR
- Classes and Spells inspired by D&D
- Magical effects inspired by Dungeon Crawl Classics
- Combat, Magic, Skills inspired by conversations with Gronka

Serve the game

DMs and players both have a duty to serve the game, to make the overall experience of this game enjoyable. What enjoyable is, exactly, is not easy to define; however, there are a few items to consider:

- Set expectations; what is the world like, what are the people like?
 - Some worlds are dangerous, some people are distrustful, some places are scary; a DM has a duty to their players to give them sign posts about these details.
- Accept failures; trails, tribulations, can help gameplay as long as they give players opportunities to continue to develop their characters.
 - Consider the [Hero's Journey](#)

Dice and Checks

The bulk of this system will use D6s for checks and spells; damage will be done with other dice depending on weapons used.

Roll	Result	Example opening a locked door
1	Major Failure	your lock pick breaks, as does the lock
2	Minor Failure	your lock pick is damaged somewhat

Roll	Result	Example opening a locked door
3	Mixed Results	the lock is damaged but the door will open
4	Mixed Results	the door is unlocked, but cannot be opened quietly
5	Minor Success	the door is unlocked and opens quietly & with ease
6	Major Success	the door is unlocked and you are now more adept at this kind of lock

A 3 should skew to slightly less good results and 4 should skew to slightly better results, at the DM's discretion.

Check Manipulators

There are three items that can effect a check, they take precedent in the follow order:

1. Skills, as defined by the player's class: give advantage on specific skill checks
2. Natural Traits, as defined by the player's identity: give +2 to general skill based checks, unless otherwise noted
3. Relevant and high ability scores reduce the likelihood of a major failure

Players only ever get one of these manipulations for a given check, they do not stack. Players must take use the one of higher precedent if able.

1. Skills and Advantage

If your character is skilled in the specific task at hand, you will roll with advantage. Advantage means roll 2d6 and pick the better of the two.

2. Natural Traits

Some natural traits would apply to a set of skills, and would therefore give a +2 bonus to any check related to this trait. However, some traits would be very specific, such as infravision and would not normally effect a die roll.

3. Relevant Ability Scores

If you have a relevant ability score of a 5 or 6, a roll of 1 is not necessarily a major failure. You will need to roll a **failure check** to "confirm the failure" which occurs on a 1 or 2.

- 1's become minor failures, with a check for major failure.
 - Roll a 1d6 for a **Failure Check** where a 1 or 2 results in a major failure.
- 2's becomes mixed results, but not entirely in your favor

Examples of relevant abilities for tasks are:

- Dexterity for a climb check
- Strength for a lift check
- Intelligence for a research check

The relevance of an ability is determined by the DM, who should give this information to the player prior to a roll. For instance, if the player is strong and wants to lift 200 Lbs. then they have a relevant

ability score; however, if this same player tries to lift 1000 Lbs. then they do not have a relevant ability bonus.

Defining Success

When there are difficult checks to be made, and the ideal results may be beyond the bounds of a character's skill, a DM should give the players an idea what a "success" would generally look like.

Building tension is an excellent tool for engaging gameplay, but it's important to temper player expectations on exceptionally difficult tasks.

Since some tasks would simply be outside the ability of a player, a "success" may just be the best case scenario given their abilities.

As an example, if a player has a high strength and wants to "kick down an iron door," but would not be physically capable due to the iron reinforcements, the DM should inform the player that "at best the player will damage the door, but they could not alone break it down."

We do not necessarily need to give players negative modifiers to prevent them from performing a ridiculous task (solving a quantum equation in minutes), but *we do need* to give them an idea of what they are capable of in the *best possible case*.

As a last note and recommendation, while a DM should give the idea of possible successes, this should be around a 5 in terms of the die roll as a 6 might give unique or interesting bonuses that themselves should be a surprise.

Character Creation

1. First roll your ability scores
2. Choose your race, heritage, or background
 - Pick two natural traits
3. Choose your class
 - Pick skills based on your intelligence, 1/2 rounded up
 - Pick skills based on your class

Abilities

Like traditional D&D, players should roll their ability scores. It is recommended to roll "down the line" where each roll is not arranged according to preference.

For each of the 4 abilities, *roll 2d6* and keep the best number.

- Strength
- Dexterity
- Will
- Intelligence
- Charisma

Constitution

Constitution is total sum of Strength, Dexterity, Will, and your current level. Used in combat, it represents your total ability to persevere and survive. The majority of damage in combat is against your constitution, not your flesh and blood. This means that you risk being exhausted and overwhelmed when you take constitution damage.

If your constitution reaches 0, you do not die. However, you collapse and are not reliably able to defend yourself against attacks.

Intelligence

This represents your ability to learn and both informal and formal education. Half this number and round up, this represents additional skills you receive advantage on. You may also choose to use one of these points on additional languages, instead of skills.

Charisma

Charisma rolls are to be rarely used in this system; ideally they are reserved for critical moments or where serious harm could occur. However, these checks should be accompanied by role playing.

As a role playing game, dialogue is considered a core feature; as such, reducing social interactions to points or rolls limits experience of play in regards to this "core" feature.

Examples of good charisma checks:

- A fighter needs to rally her mercenary allies
- A rogue needs to con their way out of a likely torture or death

Examples of bad charisma checks:

- A bard wants to seduce a maiden
- A wizard wants to convince a duke to betray his lover

Not all players prefer to role play as their character, but in dialogue based interactions players should come up with details on how or what they do while interacting with NPCs. Simple saying "I want to convince the king to hire us" provides less flavor for everyone else at the table than saying "My character, points out his noble lineage of the House of Swarsington, provides examples of loyalty to the throne (including a list of battles), in order to sway the king to hire us."

This system assumes that a player's character should be however charismatic they want them to be. That does not mean they can charm their way into anything, but any attempt to do so better serves gameplay with thoughtful and engaging dialogue.

What is a successful charismatic action then? This ultimately should be up to the DM, who should have some concept of what a given NPC might find convincing or not.

If a check is needed, simply roll "behind the scenes." If a player has relevant skills, diplomacy, lying, or is knowledgeable on the topic at hand, consider giving them advantage.

Wisdom

All players start with 1 wisdom.

Wisdom is earned through gameplay, the DM should keep track of:

- Moment where players succeed in an impressive fashion
- Moments where players fail but learn something important about the world or game.

Each of these would grant players involved a point of wisdom.

Wisdom is a resource that can be spent...

Hit points and Death

All player characters have 6 hit points, this does not increase with leveling. Often the rules refer to damage to flesh, this is damage to your hit points--as opposed to damage to your constitution.

If a player character has less than zero hit points, they are dead; this is the case whether or not they have any CON points left.

Race, Background, or Heritage

The Dungeon Master has the last say in allowed races, heritage, or background. But players need not refer to their character's identity as a race if it doesn't suit their vision.

Some backgrounds could be unbalanced*, the following table is just a suggestion.

Classic	Expanded	Modern*
Human	Half Orc	Half Giant
Elf	Half Elf	Dragonborn
Dwarf	Gnome	Tiefling
Halfling		Fairy

It is advisable to have limits on player physical size and capacity for flight and speed. In the unlikely event of a game breaking mechanic a DM reserves the right to reduce the power of a unique ability created by a player.

Pick Two Traits

Traits in this rule set are considered a *broad characteristic*, unlike skills which would apply to specific tasks. They should have a broad influence on skill based tasks or represent a single natural ability that itself is not overpowered for gameplay. For whatever background a player picks, they should decide 2 traits that describe them (and their people generally) that would effect gameplay. Examples:

- Dwarf : underground awareness, magic resistant
- Elf : magic adept, poison resistant
- Human : skillful, adaptable
- Halfling : stealthy, infravision

Player example: "My character is a tall burly human from the desert region, my people are known for being (1) skillful and (2) stealthy"

Natural traits allow for a +2 on a roll relevant to the skill. For example, if a player chooses halfling and his heritage is of a stealthy people he would roll +2 on a sneak check, hide check, or any other stealthy skill.

However, skills which are specific and trained take precedence; if a player is trained in sneaking but they are also stealthy, the roll advantage on sneak based checks instead of the +2 from being stealthy. They do not get both.

Some natural traits are more focused like magic adept; this could mean that a player starts with an additional spell if they are a wizard, or maybe they receive a bonus when studying for new spells.

The details of natural traits should be worked out with the DM. A list of recommended traits and their description will be provided in the appendix.

Skills

Skills are specific abilities that a given player would have, they are more focused than traits and represent your personal experience and training. Except for DM discretion, there are generally no limits to what a skill could be.

A DM has the right to reject a skill for being too broad. An example of a badly chosen skill would be a character who is good at "building;" structures are built out of a variety of material and techniques, a more appropriate choice would be carpentry or masonry.

All characters have a number of skills based on their intelligence, ($\text{Int} / 2$, rounded up); additionally some classes provide more skills, as does leveling in a class.

Besides during combat, most things *should not* require a skill check. Climbing up an old stonewall, negotiating prices in a market, dressing a wound, are not the sort of things that you would need to have a skill check in. Rather, if a check for a common / general task is *needed* a DM should defer to an ability check.

Skill checks are required when specialized experience or knowledge is required; specifically if failure of the task would lead to terrible consequences. Such as pick pocketing the king's purse, or forging a noble's signature, organizing the construction of fortified defenses.

Even then, with specialized skills being required, group efforts to resolve a problem with coherent dialog between players should generally trump a skill check. As long as the plan is detailed, conceivable, and somewhat reasonable, players should be able to execute complex tasks without pedantic skill checks.

Combat Skills

These skills are mentioned because they are specifically referenced in the combat rules and would be appropriate for any player interested in combat.

- Combat in heavy armor: Ignore unskilled CON damage in melee
- Grappling: +1 to engagement on grappling checks
- Wrestling throws: +2 CON damage (instead of none)
- Disarming: Advantage on disarm checks
- Improvised weaponry: +1 to damage roll
- Defensive melee combat: -1 to opponent's damage rolls
- Firing into Melee: +1 to combat roll (negates the -1)

Sample Non-Combat Skills

Samples

Carpentry	Sailing	Library Research
Bartering	Lock Picking	Specialized Knowledge
Fletching	Forgery	Diplomacy
Smithing	Mountaineering	
Tanning	Construction	

Classes

There are 4 classes based on classic D&D archtypes. While players may pick anything as a subclass as the focal identity of their character, they should try to stay within one of the classes. Classes guide leveling and character advancement.

- Warriors : Someone with advanced combat training
- Rogues : Someone with keen skills or intuition: slyness, discreteness, cleverness, back stabbing
- Magic-Users : Someone with spellcasting abilities, gained from study, natural adeptness to magic, or supernatural influence
- Priests : Someone with spellcasting-like abilities that are inspired by a holy deity or supernatural presence (personified or not)

Players should pick a subclass or identity that falls under one of these types. This is completely open ended, players are free to come up with any kind of identity. Here are some examples:

- Warrior : Streetfighter, Kung Fu Master, Gladiator, Paladin, Ranger, Knight, Swordsman, Samurai, Crossbowmen, Archer
- Rogues : Thief, Bard, Assassin, Scout, Swashbuckler, Detective
- Magic-Users : Mage, Wizard, Sorcerer, Warlock, Witch, Necromancer, Illusionist, Sage
- Priest : Druid, Cleric, Monk, Preacher, Cultist

Players should develop a clear idea of what background, training, or experience they have.

Warriors

Warriors start with 1 weapon specialization, players may freely pick any weapon that suits their intended character identity. This gives them the following abilities with their chosen weapon:

- For combat with their chosen weapon, they may riposte for full damage on a major success parry roll [6].
- For combat with their chosen weapon, once per day, advantage roll for damage
- For bows, two ranged attacks per round ranged combat rules.

For every even level as a warrior (2,4,6,etc.) they may gain either:

- 1 additional weapon specialization, they gain the above abilities for this weapon.
- 1 combat weapon feat. This is like a skill but it pertains to just 1 weapon type. Players should be creative here and work with their DM. Examples include:
 - Swift attack, gain +1 attacks with weapon against a single target during combat (recommended limit of +2)
 - Heavy attack, deal +1 constitution damage
 - Lethal attack, deal +1 flesh/HP damage on 6's
 - Cleaving attack, upon delivering a killing blow to a standing target, additional "unused" damage may be applied to an adjacent target.

Starting at level 2, warriors may gain henchmen who are willing to adventure with the party for a portion of the treasure. They are additional fighters with melee weapon and follow tactical orders given by the player character. Their basic stats are, 6HP, 10 Con, and they only deal 1d6 damage.

Henchmen Progression

Level	Max Count	Loyalty
1	0	-
2	1	4
3	2	5
4	2	6
5	3	7
6	3	8
7	3	9
8	4	10
9	4	11
10	4	12
11	5	13
12	5	14
13	5	15
14	6	16

Rogues

Rogues starts with 3 skill specializations, they may pick any **specific** skill or task to have an advantage on performing. This is more narrow than the background traits. Generally this should follow a rogue-ish motif, but with a good character concept a player should not feel limited. Examples include:

- Sneaking: players are talented at moving around in a hidden fashion and hiding in shadows

- Lock picking: players are exceptional at opening a variety of locks
- Sleight of hand: players are talented at being physically misleading and trickery
- Lying / verbal deception: players are exceptional at spinning falsehoods to unknowing victims
- Seduction: players exude charisma and physical attraction, NPCs have a disadvantage when trying to resist player suggestions

Backstab:

- This is a special attacks only Rogues (but not Bards) may have.
- Only applicable to weapons the player character is specialized in.
- The weapon must be in hand, if the player is not hidden they must pass a sleight of hand check on a 5 or 6.
- The backstab: performs a successful attack, player rolls the damage that is fully applied to HP and not to CON.
- Starts combat round if the victim lives or if there are any additional combatants

Weapon Specialization:

- For combat with their chosen weapon, they may riposte for full damage on a major success parry roll [6].
- For combat with their chosen weapon, once per day, advantage roll for damage
- For bows, two ranged attacks per round ranged combat rules.

For every even level as a rogue (2,4,6,etc.) they may gain one of:

- one additional skill, rogueish or relevant to their character's experience
- one additional advantage die for a given skill, limit of +2. For instance, sleight of hand +2 means roll 3 die pick the best roll.
- one additional weapon specialization, limit of 2 total.

Bards

A Bard starts with 2 skill specializations instead of 3, may never have more than 1 weapon specialization, and gains additional skills every 3rd level.

- May never have back stab

Level Spells per day

1	1 - - - -
2	2 - - - -
3	3 - - - -
4	3 1 - - -
5	3 2 - - -
6	3 3 - - -
7	3 3 1 - -
8	3 3 2 - -
9	3 3 3 - -

Level Spells per day

10	3 3 3 1 -
11	3 3 3 2 -
12	3 3 3 3 -
13	3 3 3 3 1
14	3 3 3 3 2

Magic-Users

Mages know 1 spell at level 1 and can cast up to 1 spell a day. Additionally, Mages gain 1 skill based on their subclass. This could be knowledge based, experience based, training based, etc. Some examples include:

- Knowledge of local history
- speak an ancient language fluently
- skilled in diplomatic policies
- skilled in debate
- Strategic warfare
- Mercantile economics

Spell Progression

Level Spells per day

1	1 - - - - -
2	2 - - - - -
3	2 1 - - - -
4	2 2 - - - -
5	2 2 1 - - -
6	2 2 2 - - -
7	3 2 2 1 - -
8	3 3 2 2 - -
9	3 3 2 2 1 -
10	3 3 3 2 -
11	4 3 3 3 2 1
12	4 4 3 3 3 2
13	4 4 4 3 3 3
14	4 4 4 4 3 3

Priests

Priests are distinguished from magic-users because they *believe* (with or without good justification) that their magical abilities are both:

- attuned to a moral or natural order of the universe
- only possible due to a supernatural influence

The ability of a priest to cast a healing spell, for example, is evidence to them that their moral / religious/ supernatural based beliefs are objectively correct.

There are two types of priests, "holy warriors" who fight for their gods / beliefs and "holy ritualists" who channel divine powers and perform rituals.

Holy Warriors

- Do not gain spell abilities at level 1, they gain them at level 2 after proving their faith
- Never gain the ability to perform rituals
- Can turn the undead
- Have 1 weapon specialization
- Skilled in tending the wounded

Holy Ritualists

- Start with 1 spell known, 1 cast per day
- Can perform ritual versions of a spell over the course of 1 hour, without "casting" them.
- Can turn the undead
- Skilled in tending the wounded

Spell Progression

Level Spells per day

1*	1 - - - -
2	1 - - - -
3	2 - - - -
4	2 1 - - -
5	2 2 - - -
6	2 2 1 1 -
7	2 2 2 1 1
8	3 3 2 2 1
9	3 3 3 2 2
10	4 4 3 3 2
11	4 4 4 3 3
12	5 5 4 4 3
13	5 5 5 4 4
14	6 5 5 5 4

*Only a holy ritualist gains a spell at first level, not a holy warrior.

Equipment

Weapons

Melee

Size	Damage	Examples
Small	1d4	club, dagger, dart, improvised weapon
Medium	1d6	short sword, rapier, quarter staff, handaxe, mace, 1h spear
Long, Heavy	1d8	1h longsword, 1h battleaxe, greatclub, flail
Two Handed	2d6	2h longsword, 2h battleaxe, 2h spear
Great	1d12	greatsword, great axe, heavy polearms

Great Weapons

These are heavy, oversized, two handed weapons. Therefore, without proper training and strength, they are slower to use. To use one without penalty, you must:

- Have a specialization in with a specific great weapon
- have a 6 in strength

If you do not meet both of these requirements, then suffer a -1 on Dex related combat result checks. Lastly, you may *not use dex* for slash related combat checks.

Ranged

Size	Damage	Examples
Small	1d4	hand crossbow
Medium	1d6	crossbow, short bow
Long, Heavy	1d8	longbow, heavy crossbow
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crossbows can only ever fire once per combat round• With weapon specialization, bows may fire twice per round.		

It is recommended to not allow longbows in standard combat; instead short bows should be used in most scenarios. This rules system has a prejudice against longbows, as historically they would from great distances in large scale battles and not the squad style combat seen in most table top RPGs. Ultimately, it is up to the discretion of the DM

Armor

Armor reduces the damage of successful attacks that deal damage to HP only. However, in combat, any type damage cannot reduced to 0; meaning, at least 1 point of damage must be dealt to either flesh or constitution.

Size	Defense	Examples
Light	-1	leather, studded leather
Medium	-2	chainmail, beastplate, hide
Heavy	-3	platemail, scalemail

- Without a skill in "combat with heavy armor," combatants burn an additional 1 CON for each round of melee.

Shields

Whether a buckler, heater, or tower shield, all shields provide:

- +1 bonus to parry
- -1 Con Damage per turn of melee combat

Combat

Combat in Zwerhhau is meant to be swift, deadly, and decisive.

It is a ritual well practiced by adventurers.

Initiative and Turn Order

1. Players declare actions and intentions.
2. DM describes NPC actions and intentions, where necessary.
3. Each side rolls 1d6, highest goes first, roll again in a tie.
4. Resolve actions for the winning side.
5. The losing side gets actions per individual not involved in an opposed check or in defensive fighting.

Those casting spells are considered performing "dodge" with a "disengage" posture unless otherwise declared.

Melee Combat Loop

Melee combat is exhausting, each round requires that the sides engaged lose 2 Constitution.

- Declare engagement posture
- Determine Player's Attacking Combat Action
- DM Rolls for NPC's action
- Determine the opposed check based on results (dex, str, or both)
- Opposed Roll - Add the relevant ability (dex, str)
 - Highest wins, note winner's value, reroll on equal values.
- Damage Roll - Winner rolls their weapon's damage dice
 - Reduce HP damage based on armor
 - Check for death
 - Apply damage bonuses
- Reduce Constitution Points, 2 per round of combat
 - If player is wearing heavy armor and unskilled, reduce CON by 1 further.

Engagement Posture

In the thick of combat, the blows may turn to a grapple. Prior to attack players may choose their default posture, to engage in grapple or to disengage.

If their default posture is to disengage, they gain a +1 on grappling DEX checks, but do not enter the grapple if they win.

Combat Actions

Players decide which type of attack based on the following:

- Thrusts: Piercing actions
 - Additional damage (+1 Con) for 1h spears
 - Additional damage (+2 Con) for 2h spears
 - Additional damage (+1 HP) for 2h swords
- Slashes / Cuts: Swinging & slicing actions
 - Additional damage (+2 Con) for any medium, long, two-handed, or great weapon
 - Additional damage (+1 Con) for blunt great weapons
 - Additional damage (+1 HP) for sharp-edged great weapons
- Parries: blocking the blow of a weapon with your weapon
 - An opposed roll of natural 6 allows for a riposte
 - Gain +1 to your roll if you have a shield
- Ripostes: a free follow up attack after a parry opposed roll of 6, half damage
 - With weapon specialization, does normal damage
- Dodges: evading an attack with quick movement
 - Allow for bonus to escape
- Grapples: clinging to your opponent to attempt a wrestling manoeuvre, with or without your weapon
 - Single-sided grapple attempts take half damage on failed DEX checks
 - Throw the opponent to the ground, greatly decreases opponent defenses, ideal action for a swift kill
 - Disarm the opponent, ideal to force an opponent to yield, 1d6 skill check
 - Sleeperhold, attempt to force the opponent to passout; if successful, you are occupied for 3 turns and are unable to defend yourself
- Defensive Fighting: Focusing on parries without ripostes, regaining footing when downed. See the below section.

NPC Combat Attack Roll

One d6 die roll representing the following actions

Roll Slashing Thrusting or Slashing Thrusting

1	DM Pick	DM Pick	DM Pick
2	Parry	Parry	Parry
3	Slash	Thrust	Thrust

Roll Slashing Thrusting or Slashing Thrusting

4	Slash	Slash	Thrust
5	Dodge	Dodge	Dodge
6	Grapple	Grapple	Grapple

Combat Attack Results

The priority table to determine result check:

Priority	Opposing Rolls	Check
1	Grapple v. Grapple	Str
2	Grapple v. Any	Dex then Str
3	Dodge v. Any	Dex
4	Slash v. Any	Dex or Str
5	Thrust v. Thrusts	Dex
6	Parry v. Thrusts	Str
7	Others	No Result

A table view of the same information:

	Cut	Thrust	Parry	Dodge	Grapple
Slash	DvS	DvS	DvS	Dex	D&S
Thrust	DvS	Dex	Str	Dex	D&S
Parry	DvS	Str	nil	nil	D&S
Dodge	Dex	Dex	nil	nil	D&S
Grapple	D&S	D&S	D&S	D&S	Str

Opposed Checks

Once you've determined which check will occur, whether strength or dex (or none at all), each side rolls 1d6 + their attribute.

The higher value wins the check and deals damage.

To succeed in a grapple check, you must first win a dex check to wrestle your opponent, and then a strength check to enter the grapple phase. If both sides attempt a grapple, you only need the strength check.

Opponents attacking someone performing "defensive fighting" still roll, but only "hit" on a 6. See below for more detail.

Damage Dealt

Damage is dealt based on the die roll of the appropriate weapon; however, damage is split between flesh / HP and Constitution.

Roll HP Damage CON Damage

1	0	1
2	1	1

Roll HP Damage CON Damage

3	1	2
4	1	3
5	2	3
6	2	4
7	3	4
8	3	5
9	4	5
10	4	6
11	5	6
12	6	6

- Damage to HP (flesh and blood) is always dealt first.
- If HP damage brings the player character **below 0 hit points**, they are dead.
- If a player character takes damage that brings them to **exactly zero hit points**:
 - Perform the *Will to Live* roll to see if they survive.
 - Do not process any additional damage
- If a player is **above zero hit points**, add damage bonuses.
- If after damage bonuses the player is **at or below zero HP**, they are dead.

The Will to Live

1. Make a 1d12 *Will to Live* roll. If the player rolls equal to or under thier Will ability score, they are not dead.
2. Next, they must roll on the *Scars, Broken Bones, and Mortal Wounds* table below.
3. The must roll a 1d6, add the result to their maximum HP.
4. The player character is still at 0 HP but are unconscious.
5. Ignore any damage bonuses, they are out of the fight.
6. Without medical aid soon, they will die.

Scars, Broken Bones, and Mortal Wounds

Roll 1d6

- On a 1-2 you gain a scar
- On a 3-5 you have a broken bone
- On a 6 you have a mortal wound, you will die unless untreated.

Roll 1d4, see where you have been wounded.

1d4 Scars (1,2) Broken Bones (3,4,5) Mortal Wounds (6)

1	Facial	Skull	Lose an Eye
2	Chest	Ribs	Punctured Organ
3	Arm	Arm	Lose an arm
4	Leg	Leg	Lose a leg

Damage Bonuses

Based on the opposed die roll, the victor may deal additional damage to their opponent, to either their HP (flesh and blood) or to their CON (thier overall endurance)

Roll Upright Opponent Downed Opponent

1	nil	nil
2	nil	+1 Con damage
3	nil	+1 Con Damage
4	+1 Con Damage	+2 Con Damage
5	+2 Con Damage	+1 HP, +1 Con Dmg
6	+1 HP, +1 Con Dmg	+2 HP, +2 Con Dmg

Attack type bonuses

These are mentioned previously, but to restate:

- Thrusts
 - Additional damage (+1 Con) for 1h spears
 - Additional damage (+2 Con) for 2h spears
 - Additional damage (+1 HP) for 2h swords
- Slashes
 - Additional damage (+2 Con) for any medium, long, two-handed, or great weapon
 - Additional damage (+1 Con) for blunt great weapons
 - Additional damage (+1 HP) for sharp-edged great weapons

Defensive Fighting

Defensive Fighting occurs in place of an opposed roll. Opponents land hits only on 6s and additional opponents gain bonuses to hit. Players should consider this choice when they need to perform the following:

- Keep enemies at bay
- Parry incoming attacks
- Avoid being encircled
- Regain footing after being knock down, lose 1 CON

Actions for opponents

- Hit the defensive fighter only on a 6
- Do not gain damage bonuses if alone
- For each additional opponent attacking, each attacker gains a +1 to their roll with a maximum of +3.
- If there are 3 or more opponents attacking the defensive fighter, they deal +1 CON damage each.

Dodge

On a successful dodge roll a player suffers no damage from a single attack. Ideally used in 1 on 1 scenarios, otherwise defensive fighting is recommended.

- If there is more than 1 opponent, a player must declare who they are dodging, if there is more than 1 opponent.
- If they succeed on a 5 or 6, they may attempt to escape if there is a viable route to retreat.
- On a success and for each additional opponent, they must expend 1 CON to continue dodging with a maximum of 3 CON.
- If there are multiple opponents, and the player cannot expend Constitution, opponents land hits on 5s and 6s.

Those performing spellcasting are considering taking a dodge action in case they are attacked. If an opponent attacks them and they lose the opposed check (dex) the spell fails.

Grappling and Wrestling

One Sided Grapple Attempts

If only one combatant attempts a grapple, there are two checks:

- First dexterity, this represents the lunge or springing action an attacker would make to quickly close distance before a strike is made against them. Also, it represents the opponent swinging their weapon or moving away from the grappler.
- Upon failure: If the opposing side performed a *thrust* or *slash*, take damage.
- Upon success: A standard opposed strength check to see who dominates.

Grapple Strength Check

If both sides are performing a grapple, each side rolls 1d6 & add their strength, winner performs a wrestling manoeuvre.

- Disarm the opponent: Attempt to remove the opponent's weapon, this is ideal for forcing a yield, requires a 1d6 skill check
- Throw the opponent to the ground: Drastically reduce an opponent's defensive capabilities by forcing them into a prone position, this is ideal for a swift kill.
- Sleeperhold: Attempt to force the opponent to pass out; if successful, you are occupied for 3 turns and are unable to defend yourself, requires a 1d6 skill check.

These manoeuvres are the sort of thing a warrior would want to have "skills" in, giving them an "advantage roll."

Relevant Grappling Skills

- Grappling: +1 to engagement on grappling STR checks
- Wrestling throws: +2 CON damage (instead of none)
- Disarming: Advantage on disarm checks

Riposte

If a player rolled a parry versus a slash or thrust, and they win the opposed check with a natural roll of 6, may riposte.

A riposte is follow up to a successful parry that allows for a damage roll halved; with weapon specialization, normal damage is dealt.

A parry roll of 5 with a +1 for a shield does not allow for a riposte, the roll must be a natural 6.

Small Sized Combatants

This mainly applies to half sized humanoids (halflings, gnomes, kobolds, etc.) fighting medium sized humanoids (humans, dwarves, elves, etc).

If you are of this "small" size fighting a medium sized opponent:

- Any constitution damage you deal is halved. This *does not* apply to flesh damage to HP.
- You receive advantage during grappling if your posture is to disengage.

For example, a halfling equipped with a two-handed long sword should be able to land a lethal blow on a human; however, due to their relative strength, they are unlikely to "wear down" the physical endurance of someone twice their size. Additionally, being small often tends to increase nimbleness and agility, therefore the "small" sized combatant is better suited to escape a grapple.

These advantages do not scale beyond small versus medium opponents.

Ranged Combat

Ranged combat is a simplified process of the melee combat steps, it does not exhaust your CON unless you are forced into melee.

Those with specialization in bows may perform two attacks instead of one, except in scenario 4 when forced into melee.

There are four ranged combat scenarios:

1. Firing at a suspecting target not in melee
 - Success on 3 to 6
2. Firing into a target in melee
 - Success on 4 to 6
3. Firing at unsuspecting targets not in combat
 - Success on 3 to 6, with special damage bonuses
4. Firing at a target before being forced into melee
 - Bow or crossbow must be drawn or armed already
 - Success on 4 to 6, with special close range damage bonuses
 - No additional ranged attacks

1. Standard Ranged Combat

In this scenario you are firing at a target that is aware they are in combat, but they are not currently engaged in melee.

Roll a standard 1d6 to attack, on a success of 3 to 6, roll for damage using the standard damage chart.

Apply bonuses based on your roll and whether the opponent is upright or downed.

2. Firing into Melee

It is not easy to fire on a target that is engaged in melee. Attack rolls suffer a -1 modifier. This means you cannot do better than a 5.

Roll a standard 1d6 with a -1 modifier, on a roll of 4 to 6,

3. Unsuspecting Targets

Bows in small combat are best utilized against unsuspecting targets, therefore the damage possibilities lend themselves toward the attacker.

These bonuses are only gained if the target is *not* currently engaged in combat.

A ranged attacker makes a 1d6 check to hit their target, akin to a stand skill check.

Roll Ranged Damage v. Unaware Targets

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Miss, target is aware of attack |
| 2 | Miss, target remains unaware |
| 3 | +1 Con Damage |
| 4 | +2 Con Damage |
| 5 | +1 HP, +2 Con Damage |
| 6 | +2 HP, +2 Con Damage |

Only on a roll of 2 does the target remain unaware of combat

- With a long or shortbow, and weapon specialization, you may make 1 additional attack for this scenario (3) unsuspecting targets.

On any other roll, future attack rolls fall under the other ranged combat scenarios.

4. Forced into Melee

When an opponent charges or attacks a player performing ranged combat, that player may make a single ranged attack.

In this scenario, players must already have their bow drawn or a crossbow armed and aiming.

Immediately roll a 1d6, with a success on 4 to 6. On a success roll your damage die and 1d4, determine the total damage per the standard damage chart.

Apply additional damage based on the below chart.

Roll Close Ranged Damage

1 Miss

2 Miss

3 Miss

4 +1 Con Damage

5 +1 HP, +1 Con Damage

6 +2 HP, +1 Con Damage

- If the opponent is still alive, the player is forced into melee combat with their ranged weapon as an improvised melee weapon that only deals 1d4 damage.
- If the opponent is upright, they perform a 1d6 melee attack roll and deals damage on a success.
- Players may choose to drop their ranged weapon and unsheath a melee weapon at a cost of 2 CON damage during the ensuing melee.

Combat against Monsters and Beasts

Tactics used against monsters and beasts are not the same as those used against a humanoid.

The concept of an opposed check starts to fall apart when your opponent can spew acid from its mouth or swipe at you with its tail. Attacks like tripping, wrestling, and the like may apply to another humanoid, but they make far less sense against beholder or a rhinoceros.

Therefore, to keep combat simple, when fighting a target that is not your standard humanoid, such as a werebear, beholder, or a dragon, damage is done directly to HP and we ignore the Con aspect of combat. Essentially, you are trying to stay alive while trying to wound the beast, ideally landing a killing blow; you are not trying to overwhelm it.

How do I know I am fighting a monster?

The basic rule of thumb is grappling, can you engage in a grappling struggle with a target and not suffer greatly? For example, would you grapple with 800lb 10 foot tall polar bear? Probably not. Would you engage in a grapple with a 7 foot 300 lb Orc? Maybe.