

HACK

*A dicey dungeon crawling game
written by Bryan Smith*

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A DICEY DUNGEON DELVING GAME

CORE MECHANICS

When confronting a CHALLENGE within the DUNGEON, the GM will roll and assign a number of D6s to each character. The number of dice and who they target is determined by each CHALLENGE. The total of the dice assigned to a character in this way represents the CHALLENGE they must take Action to overcome. Matching or exceeding it is a Success, rolling less is a Failure.

Whatever Action a character makes grants 1D6 to roll against the CHALLENGE.

Additional dice can be added to the dice pool roll by using a SKILL(D4) and/or WIELDING GEAR(D4), ITEM(D4), or MAGIC ITEM(2D4).

A character who is able to utilize their SKILL, and WIELD a MAGIC ITEM has a good chance of overcoming most CHALLENGES in a DUNGEON, but they may burn themselves out quickly by using MAGIC during their delve.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

"Rowan the Knight of Roses stumbles over the scattered bones of a former adventurer before suddenly being attacked by a slimy tentacled beast launching from the ceiling."

The Beast has a Frenzied Tentacle Attack of 3D6 which targets a single character so the GM rolls (2,3,5) and assigns them all to Rowan. The CHALLENGE is $2+3+5=10$.

Rowan takes ACTION, dodging to the side (1D6) and thanks to her Keen Senses SKILL (1D4) she reacts quicker than the previous victim. The player realizes their odds to beat a CHALLENGE of 10 with a D6 and D4 isn't great so chooses to describe how Rowan's Plate Armor GEAR(1D4) withstands a stray tentacle strike as well, adding another D4 to their roll. The player rolls their pool of 1D6+1D4+1D4 and hopes to get a 10 or higher, a failure results in Rowan taking a WOUND. A success counts against the Beast's TOUGHNESS.

CHARACTER CREATION

An adventurer needs only 3 things to start their journey.

A NAME, a piece of trusty GEAR, and a SKILL. Characters can carry up to 2 extra items.

- Characters start at LEVEL 1 and can suffer 3 WOUNDS and 3 STRESS before they perish.
- CHALLENGES may give a Character an AFFLICTION, if a Character ever has 3 AFFLICTIONS they perish.

NAME
GEAR
SKILL
ITEM SLOT A
ITEM SLOT B
WOUNDS
STRESS

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

P X

EXPLORE ROLL

When the party delves into the DUNGEON a leader is picked and they make an EXPLORE roll. The character leading the round of exploration makes the roll using their D6(D4 if ASTRAY) and any relevant SKILL or GEAR/ITEM/MAGIC ITEM. This roll determines what DUNGEON AREA they find next.

DUNGEON AREAS

These are not specific rooms with specific dimensions, rather they are evocative settings where the next CHALLENGE will occur. Some DUNGEON AREAS contain FEATURES that can be triggered by crafty enemies or daring characters.

DUNGEON AREA FEATURE

A character may choose to attempt to trigger some FEATURE of a DUNGEON AREA instead of WIELDING a GEAR/ITEM/MAGIC ITEM. When triggered, these FEATURES have an automatic effect that may or may not benefit the party, but can be a last resort for a desperate party.

SPECIAL DUNGEON AREAS

- Finding STAIRS will allow access to the 2nd Level of the DUNGEON
- Finding FOUNTAINS will allow the party to HEAL 1D4 AFFLICTIONS
- Finding SHELTER will allow the party to REST and recover all WOUNDS or all STRESS
- Finding the LAIR will allow the party to confront the BOSS

CHALLENGE ROLL

The GM makes this roll to determine what CHALLENGE the party will face in the DUNGEON AREA discovered by the EXPLORE roll.

- 1st Level of DUNGEON : 1D6 OR 2D6
- 2nd Level of DUNGEON : 3D6

CHALLENGES

All the deadly events that occur within the DUNGEON are referred to as CHALLENGES. A CHALLENGE will always have the potential to grant XP and the ability to deal a WOUND, STRESS, AFFLICTION, or send the party ASTRAY.

Each CHALLENGE has an ATTACK, TOUGHNESS, and XP value.

- ATTACK describes how many D6s are rolled and how they are assigned to the party to determine the CHALLENGE for each character.
- TOUGHNESS represents how many times the party must beat the rolls of the CHALLENGE and how many D6s a character must beat if making an ATTACK. A TOUGHNESS of 4D6 means a CHALLENGE roll must be beaten 4 times in total to overcome it.
- XP is the number of D6s rolled to generate and apply XP. This number is not split, but applied to each character.

CHALLENGE TYPES

Each CHALLENGE TYPE has a unique aspect and they can generally be broken down into these categories. COMBAT, TRAP, HAZARD, or BOSS.

- During COMBAT luck can often play just as important a part as preparation or cleverness. If a 6 is rolled by a player on their D6 a CRITICAL effect occurs.
- Encountering a TRAP can spell the end of a delve, but often valuable LOOT is nearby. Some TRAPS trigger SUDDENLY while others may be disarmed.
- Some parts of a DUNGEON are just naturally (or unnaturally) difficult to get past. These are HAZARDS and if not overcome, will cause the party to go ASTRAY, thwarting adventurers from delving deeper.
- The BOSS of the DUNGEON provides a nasty challenge. Overcoming its LAIR as well as its powerful ATTACKS may prove to be too much for an ill prepared party.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

- **COMBAT CHALLENGES**
 - Rolling higher than the CHALLENGE of an enemy ATTACK will count against its TOUGHNESS
 - If not the target of an enemy ATTACK a character may describe an ATTACK of their own which will be rolled against the TOUGHNESS of the enemy, beating that value will count against its TOUGHNESS.
- **TRAP CHALLENGES**
 - SUDDEN TRAPS trigger instantly, making their ATTACK right away. Other TRAPS may be disarmed if a character rolls higher than the TRAPS TOUGHNESS.
- **HAZARD CHALLENGES**
 - If a HAZARD is failed, the party is ASTRAY and may take some other penalty. Going ASTRAY in the DUNGEON causes the next EXPLORE roll to be made with a D4 instead of D6.

FAILING CHALLENGES

If a character fails a roll during a CHALLENGE they might be dealt a WOUND or a STRESS. If a character has filled in all the WOUNDS and STRESS they can withstand, they perish.

- Using a MAGIC ITEM costs 1 STRESS. Take too much STRESS and you will be unable to wield MAGIC ITEMS.
- Some CHALLENGES may cause an AFFLICTION to a character. An AFFLICTION represents some kind of ill effect. Some last until the character can find a FOUNTAIN and clear AFFLICTIONS.

WIELDING ITEMS

Any character can choose up to 1 of the following objects to WIELD (add to roll) while taking action. All LOOT found in the DUNGEON will be an ITEM, a piece of GEAR, or a MAGIC ITEM.

• **ITEMS**

Using an ITEM from your pack allows you to add 1D4 to your roll and the ITEM is consumed/destroyed. Even the most random objects found in a DUNGEON are considered an ITEM if they can be creatively WIELDED by a character.

• **GEAR**

Using a piece of equipped GEAR allows you to add 1D4 to your roll. If a 1 is rolled on this die the GEAR is broken and must occupy an ITEM SLOT to be kept.

◦ **EQUIPPING GEAR**

- GEAR can only be used if it is equipped (written in the GEAR section)
- Equipping GEAR can not be done in the middle of a CHALLENGE.

• **MAGIC ITEMS**

When invoking MAGIC through the use of a MAGIC ITEM add 2D4 to your roll. Using a MAGIC ITEM causes 1 STRESS.

If you cannot take any more STRESS you cannot use a MAGIC ITEM.

HELPING

During a CHALLENGE a character can choose to HELP an ally rather than make a roll themselves. A character may reroll 1 die for each ally who is HELPING them.

FLEEING

At any point during a CHALLENGE a character can decide to FLEE. There are negatives to this, but sometimes it's the only option. A character who flees incurs the following:

- Cannot gain XP from the CHALLENGE
- Gain 1 STRESS if able
- Character is ASTRAY

GAINING XP

After a CHALLENGE is overcome, the GM rolls dice determined by the XP value from the CHALLENGE and applies that number to each character who did not FLEE the CHALLENGE.

SEARCHING FOR LOOT

Each character who has not fled can roll like normal, using a SKILL or anything useful they are WIELDING to explore the space for LOOT. DUNGEON AREAS and CHALLENGES may have LOOT tables on them, some LOOT is found no matter the roll, some will require an individual to roll a certain number to discover them.

- HEALING POTIONS can be used in place of an ACTION during a CHALLENGE or outside a CHALLENGE anytime to restore all WOUNDS or all STRESS

LEVELING UP

Each Character begins at 1st Level with 0 XP and gains toughness as they advance.

LVL 1 (0XP) Can take 3 WOUNDS/STRESS

LVL 2 (25XP) Can take 4 WOUNDS/STRESS

LVL 3 (60XP) Can take 5 WOUNDS/STRESS

LVL 4 (100XP) Can take 6 WOUNDS/STRESS

FLOW OF PLAY

1. EXPLORE
2. CHALLENGE
3. TAKE ACTIONS
4. GAIN XP
5. SEARCH FOR LOOT

FLOW OF PLAY FOR HAZARDS

1. HAZARD MAKES ATTACK
2. CHARACTERS TAKE ACTION AGAINST ANY ATTACKS
3. CHARACTERS MAKE THEIR OWN ATTACKS IF NOT DEFENDING
4. EFFECTS ARE RESOLVED

FLOW OF PLAY FOR COMBAT

1. ENEMY MAKES ATTACK
2. CHARACTERS TAKE ACTION AGAINST ANY ATTACKS
3. CHARACTERS MAKE THEIR OWN ATTACKS IF NOT DEFENDING
4. EFFECTS ARE RESOLVED

FLOW OF PLAY FOR TRAPS

1. ROLL AGAINST TOUGHNESS TO DISARM
 - a. IF DISARMED, CAN PROCEED TO LOOT ROLL
 - b. IF NOT DISARMED, TRAP MAKES ATTACK
 - i. CHARACTERS TAKE ACTION AGAINST ANY ATTACKS
 - ii. CHARACTERS MAKE THEIR OWN ATTACKS IF NOT DEFENDING
 - iii. EFFECTS ARE RESOLVED