

Alternate Location Rules For Dungeon World

We use Locations as the frame for which an adventure will take place; it can help tell a satisfying story by providing the player characters with the NPCs, critical plot elements and scenarios they care about, all within an interesting backdrop. With that in mind, try to make Location tags *actionable*! Finally, remember that this is just a tool to aid you as a GM; change or throw out anything you don't like! **See the end of this document for an example Location.**

First, decide what type of Location you'll be creating; it might be a **Steading** (village, city) a **Dungeon** (ruins, lair, etc), or **something else entirely**. Geographic elements can work as Locations as well. *The Shifting Sands* (a desert region, an oasis), or *The Barrens* (an ancient battlefield, now a tent city for those picking through the remains) would contain all of the properties of a proper **Location**.

Then, choose a **Name**. There is already a lot out there on how this should be done; the Perilous Wilds supplement has a ton of great tables with translations from different languages. Highly recommended! Quick tip: try to think of the purpose of the town and combine its description with a prefix/suffix indicating the type of place; for example a trading village nestled in the side of a mountain road might be called Bluff's Hold; or a major port city that acts as a critical trading junction between the Capital city could be called Port Royale.

Next, choose 3-4 tags to describe the level of **safety** within the **Location**: how well-protected it is against attackers as well as its level of prosperity. Example tags: *safe, sketchy, dangerous, protected, vulnerable, fortified, wealthy, poor, comfortable*.

Decide what **Ties** (if any) your Location may have with other People or Locations around the world. Remember, it isn't enough to just list the name of another place, you have to make them actionable. *Pledges Allegiance To The Drak'mar Horde, Trades Exclusively With The Royal Council, or Relies On Cloud City Refuse* are a few such examples.

Impressions are special qualities that the player characters would notice right away; they are what makes the place unique and memorable. Try to use evocative (but memorable) language to illustrate the "feel" of a place; phrases like *labyrinthine ruins, obscured by fog, accessible only by sky-ship, or renowned libraries*. Remember, **Impressions** aren't supposed to be **Moves**; instead they paint a picture of the place and its populace that an outsider would notice right away. Locations shouldn't be static or boring, they should feel alive, but most especially, *lived in*. Actionable, memorable tags really help drive this home.

Impulses help represent the overall attitude of a Location towards the player characters, how its denizens may react to outsiders, and what the **Cast** may want from the player characters. Examples include *Reject Unclean Elements, This Community Above All Else, or The Destitute Will Rise Up, And Soon*. They should be above all be actionable, and describe in simple terms

what a **Location** will do to achieve its goals. Try to pick as few **Impulses** as possible; they aren't **Moves** (though they do tend to go hand-in-hand).

The **Cast** of your **Location** represent the primary actors within a place, in particular those that the player characters may run into. Don't simply list the leadership of a place; instead think of NPCs (or NPC concepts) that will be interesting for the players to interact with while visiting the **Location**. Examples might be *Lorsa, the Faith Healer*, *Town Elder Kvareto*, or *a Familiar Face*.

Moves represent any actions that the **Location** might take against the player characters. This doesn't always have to be something negative, of course: they simply offer a possible counterpoint or reaction to the player characters. Take the **Impressions** and **Impulses** you already have, and think about how they might translate into actionable **Moves**. Some examples:

- *Take Advantage Of Outsiders*
- *Lavish Them With False Praise*
- *Reveal A Forgotten Truth*
- *Sell Them Something They Need, But Not What They Want*

History

Some may find it useful to write information and descriptions beyond what is represented here. If you do, try to keep them shorter than a few sentences! Remember, the **Location** should be *alive*, and too much detail may spoil that as it would limit player input.

Example Location From *The Hobbit*

Lake-town (or Esgaroth)

Steading (*dangerous, protected, moderately wealthy*)

Ties: The Lonely Mountain (once-feared, now forgotten)

Impressions:

- Barrels tied together like rafts being poled up stream
- A wide circle of quiet water surrounded by the tall poles of the greater houses
- Long wooden quays with many steps and ladders, thronged with hurrying feet

Impulses: *Selfishness*

Cast: *The Master, Bard The Bowman*

Moves

- Make them pay, for anything and everything.
- Honor heroes publicly, only to mock them later.
- Damn the ancient legends and their role to play.

History

- Close to the ruins of Dale; where the dragon *Smaug* lives.
- *The Master* thirsts for power, and will seduce any that might further his goals.
- *Bard the Bowman* (a true believer) protects the town from any and all threats.