

Pentastrike Engine

Goal:

- No more “I whiff and do *nothing* for 3 rounds.”
- Keep *overall* DPR close to PF.
- Add a **Rock–Paper–Scissors–Lizard–Spock**-style mind game via hit locations.

The layers:

1. **Base Damage (always happens)**
 2. **Weapon Damage (halved dice on a hit)**
 3. **Called-Shot RPS Bonus (only if you hit)**
 4. **Level Proficiency Bonus (only if you hit)**
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2. Damage Formula

For a **weapon attack**:

2.1 Base Damage (applies on hit *and* miss)

Base Damage B = (STR mod + DEX mod) / 2

- Use .5 values if you’re digital (3.5 is fine).
- If playing purely analog, you can round down or “double everything” as an optional simplification.

On **any attack**, hit or miss, you deal **B**.

2.2 Halved Weapon Dice (hit only)

Replace PF’s full weapon dice with a **half-die version** on a hit:

- 1d4 → **1d2** (or d4/2 in digital)
- 1d6 → **1d3**
- 1d8 → **1d4**
- 1d10 → **1d5**
- 1d12 → **1d6**

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Call this roll **H**. It's only added on a **hit**.

2.3 RPS Hit Location Bonus (hit only)

Each weapon has a **Bonus Die**:

- Light / 1H finesse weapons → **d4**
- Normal 1H martial → **d4** (or d6 if you want them a bit punchier)
- 2H weapons → **d6**
- High-impact / heavy (greataxe, earthbreaker, etc.) → **d6** (or d8 if you want them scarier)

Call this die **R**.

The RPS grid gives you a multiplier **M** ∈ {−1, 0, 0, +1, +2}.

RPS Bonus Damage = max(0, M × R)

(i.e., if M = −1 and you roll high, you can't drop below 0 from *this* part; base damage B still applies.)

This only happens on a **hit**.

2.4 Level Proficiency Damage (hit only)

To match PF DPR without whiff-misery:

Proficiency Damage P = ⌊ character level / 3 ⌋

- Full martials (Fighter, Barbarian, etc.): use this as-is.
- 3/4 BAB classes (Cleric, Rogue, Bard): maybe use ⌊level / 4⌋ instead.
- 1/2 BAB (Wizard, Sorcerer): maybe use ⌊level / 5⌋.

Again, **P** is **only added on a hit**, *not* on a miss.

2.5 Final Attack Damage

Let **p** = **chance to hit** (as usual, from attack vs AC).

On a given swing:

- **On a hit:**

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$$\text{Damage}_{\text{hit}} = B + H + (M \times R) + P$$
$$\text{Damage}_{\text{hit}} = B + H + (M \times R) + P$$

- **On a miss:**

$$\text{Damage}_{\text{miss}} = B$$

Expected value matches PF pretty well at level 10 with $P = \lfloor L/3 \rfloor$, while avoiding dead rounds.

3. The RPS Hit Location System

We're using 5 Targets

- **Head**
- **Right Arm**
- **Chest**
- **Legs**
- **Left Arm**

3.1 How to Use In Play

For each melee (or precise ranged) attack:

1. **Attacker secretly chooses a target location** (Head, RA, Chest, Legs, LA).
2. **Defender secretly chooses a defense focus** (same list).
 - If they don't know the system or are unaware/surprised, just default them to **Chest**.
3. Reveal both, then look up the **result M** in the table below.
4. If the attack roll **hits AC**, apply the bonus:
 - If $M > 0 \rightarrow$ roll $M \times \text{Bonus}$ Die (e.g. 2d4 for $M=2$, d4 for $M=1$) and add to damage.
 - If $M = 0 \rightarrow$ no bonus.
 - If $M = -1 \rightarrow$ roll $1 \times \text{Bonus}$ Die and *subtract* it from the attack's bonus part (minimum 0 from this component; base damage still applies).

If the attack **misses AC**, you still keep **Base Damage B**, but ignore R, H, P, and the RPS result.

3.2 RPS Table (as we finalized)

Rows = Attacker's target

Columns = Defender's focus

Entry = M (the multiplier)

Attacker \ Defender Head Right Arm Chest Legs Left Arm

Head	-1	0	+2	+1	0
Right Arm	0	-1	0	+2	+1
Chest	+1	0	-1	0	+2
Legs	+2	+1	0	-1	0
Left Arm	0	+2	+1	0	-1

Pattern per row is always: **-1, 0, 0, +1, +2** (just rotated), which keeps everything symmetric and fair.

4. Weapon Conversion Examples

You don't need a huge table; a simple guideline + a few anchor examples is enough.

4.1 Weapon Tags

For each PF weapon:

1. Keep its **attack properties** (crit range, crit multiplier, reach, finesse, etc.).
2. Convert damage:

Original New Hit Dice Bonus Die

1d4	1d2	d4
1d6	1d3	d4
1d8	1d4	d4
1d10	1d5	d6
1d12	1d6	d6

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You can bump Bonus Die up to d6 on “big martial” or 2H weapons if you want a higher divergence between dagger and greataxe.

4.2 Sample Weapons

Dagger

- Original: 1d4, light, finesse
- New:
 - Hit die: 1d2
 - Bonus Die: d4

Longsword

- Original: 1d8
- New:
 - Hit die: 1d4
 - Bonus Die: d4

Greataxe

- Original: 2d6 (avg 7)
- You can compress to 1d6 (avg 3.5) + heavier bonus die:
 - Hit die: 1d6
 - Bonus Die: d6 (or even d8 if you're okay with big spikes on good guesses)

Greataxe

- Original: 1d12
- New:
 - Hit die: 1d6
 - Bonus Die: d6

Shortbow

- Original: 1d6

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- New:
 - Hit die: 1d3
 - Bonus Die: d4

Longbow

- Original: 1d8
 - New:
 - Hit die: 1d4
 - Bonus Die: d4
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5. Monster Conversion

You can do this super light-touch.

5.1 Monster Base Damage

For each monster's primary attack:

1. Compute a pseudo-STR/DEX mod:
 - If it has Str and Dex, use them as normal.
 - If not, you can approximate:

Attack Bonus – BAB $\approx$ ability + misc.

Just pick a STR mod that “feels right” and maybe give Dex mod = 0 unless it's agile.

2. Set:

Monster Base B = (STR mod + DEX mod) / 2 (round as you like)

5.2 Monster Hit Dice & Bonus Die

Take the monster's attack damage:

- Convert the **main die** using the same table (1d8 $\rightarrow$ 1d4, etc.).
- Give them a **Bonus Die**:
 - Big brute melee $\rightarrow$ d6
 - Nimble fey / skirmish $\rightarrow$ d4

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- Bosses might get d8 on signature attacks.

If you don't want monsters playing RPS in detail, you can:

- Let **PCs still pick hit locations**,
- Monster is assumed to "defend Chest" by default unless it's a duel-type or boss, which can actually pick locations and play the mind game.

That keeps combat fast but still fun.

6. Class Feature Hooks (Quick Version)

You don't need to rewrite every class. Use your engine as the shared chassis and map the old bonuses onto it cleanly.

Fighter

- Keep **full BAB, feats, etc.**
- Map old static damage bonuses like Weapon Training / Specialization into:
 - Either **extra +1 to P** at certain levels, **or**
 - Extra **+1 to Base B** with chosen weapon group.
- Example: Fighter 10:
 - $P = \lfloor 10/3 \rfloor = 3$
 - Weapon Training in Swords $\rightarrow +1$ B when using swords

Barbarian

- **Rage** adds to **B**, not to weapon dice:
 - Rage: +4 STR $\rightarrow$ increases STR mod, which pushes B directly.
- Optionally: on Rage, if hit location $M \geq +1$, treat M as M+1 (angrier, nastier called shots).

Rogue

- Keep **Sneak Attack** as a separate pool that's only on hit:
 - Instead of 5d6 SA, you could do 5d3 or even keep 5d6 as-is if you don't mind swing.
- Rogues can get bonuses to **RPS guesses**:

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- E.g., “If you beat the defender’s choice ($M \geq +1$), roll RPS bonus dice with advantage (roll twice, keep best)”.

Ranger / Paladin / Others

- Favored Enemy or Smite could be:
 - +1 or +2 to **P** vs that target, or
 - Treat one 0 result on the RPS table as if it were +1.

You can bolt class flavor onto any of the four layers: B, H, RPS bonus, or P.

7. VTT / Macro Style Expression

For a single attack in a digital platform:

1. **Roll to hit** as usual.
2. Resolve hit/miss.
3. Roll RPS:
 - AttackerChoice = one of [head, RA, chest, legs, LA]
 - DefenderChoice = same
 - Look up **M** in the table.
4. If **hit**:

Pseudocode:

$B = (\text{STRmod} + \text{DEXmod}) / 2$

$H = \text{roll}(\text{halfWeaponDie})$ // e.g. 1d4 for longsword

$R = 0$

if $M > 0$:

$R = \text{roll}(M \text{ times BonusDie})$ // d4, d6, etc.

else if $M == -1$:

$R = -\text{roll}(\text{BonusDie})$

$P = \text{floor}(\text{level} / 3)$ // or class-scaled

$\text{bonusPart} = H + R + P$

if $\text{bonusPart} < 0$:

$\text{bonusPart} = 0$

$\text{totalDamage} = B + \text{bonusPart}$

If **miss**:

$\text{totalDamage} = B$

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