ORIGINAL EDITION DELTA

House Rules Compatible with Original D&D

JUDGE'S RULES (V. 1.0.7)

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TARGET 20

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CHARACTERS

ZERO-LEVEL CHARACTERS

Zero Level: Normal men are assumed to be 0-level: Roll 3d6 for abilities in order, 1d6 for hit points, no attack bonus, and start at –1,000 XP. Familiarity with up to three weapon types is allowed. [1]

Advancement: When achieving 0 XP, the character can enter one of the three basic classes. This assumes: At least one combat encounter for a Fighter; one act of larceny for a Thief; or one spell learned for a Wizard (*read magic*). Fighters gain 1 hp, and Wizards lose 1 hp, at this time. [2]

HIGHER-LEVEL CHARACTERS

Abilities: Levels 1-3 roll one ability 2d6+6, others 3d6. Levels 4-7 roll two 2d6+6, others 3d6. Levels 8+ roll one 2d4+10, three 2d6+6, and others 3d6. [3]

Hit Points: Reroll results of "1" or "2" for all hit dice at time of creation. [4]

Magic Items: Characters should be checked for magic items at 1-in-6 per level. Check for each of the following: (1) sword or wand, (2) armor or scroll, (3) potion, (4) weapon, ring, or miscellaneous (roll 1d3). Roll a d6 per level for each category; each "1" indicates a +1 bonus, extra ability or dosage, etc. [5]

Spellbooks: Wizards should generate a random spellbook, using the Intelligence table in Sup-I. [6]

Languages: Give one extra language per level, up to the Int limit. [7]

Equipment: Characters can take any mundane item, encumbrance permitting.

HIRING NPCS

Advertising: Every 100 sp spent on posts/agents attracts 1d3 1st-level recruits, max 1% per community (e.g., 1-6 for a village). Calls to elf-land, dwarf-land, etc. should multiply cost and add days or weeks of time. [8]

Offers: Basic offer is 100 sp + half-share of treasure. NPC accepts with reaction roll of 2d6 + Cha ≥ 9, modified for variation in offer. Experience is at half-share for all hirelings. Say that 0-level men-at-arms never go into a dungeon. NPCs will any estate (gear, magic) to a relative. [9]

MONSTERS

Hit Dice: Monster hit dice are d6 each, as per the original rules. [10]

Attacks: Monsters get one attack, at 1d6 damage, unless stated otherwise. [11]

Goblins: Goblins, orcs, and kobolds are at –4 to attack in full daylight. [12]

Giants: Giants can throw stones every other round. [13]

Undead: Immune to mental attacks, back stabs, critical hits, and death effects. Level drain allows a save vs. death to avoid; if failed, max hp are reduced proportionally, and current hp reduced by like amount (dead at 0); XP set at midpoint of prior level. [14]

Skeletons/Zombies: Skeletons have 1 HD; Zombies have 2 HD. [15]

Vampires: Summoned monsters are Rat (AC 7, MV 15, hp 1, Atk 1, Dam 1 pt), or Wolf (AC 7, MV 18, HD 2+2, Atk 1, Dam 1d6). [16]

Mummies/Lycanthropes: Mummy rot and lycanthropy can be treated with *remove curse* (within the usual time limits). [17]

Gorgons/Chimeras: The breath attacks of these creatures use the same rules as for Dragons (breathe 7+ on 2d6, 3 times per day).

Dragons: Divide hit points by 3 for prorated HD; use this for attacks and saves. Divide hits by 6 for breath weapon damage dice. They can *detect* and cause *fear* in 15" (force NPC morale). Subdual rules are ignored. [18]

Slimes: Metal-consumption occurs with a standard attack roll. Corrosion of weapons occurs on any hit. Wood consumption is too slow for combat use. [19]

Horses: Non-warhorses are unusable in combat, near fire or smells, etc. Maximum load is 24/36/48 stone. [20]

Diseases: Use Sup-II appendix for durations. Save vs. breath avoids Strength damage; recovery requires bed rest. E.g.: Bubonic plague (rats, 1d12/day, rec. 3/week), spotted fever (ticks, 1d6/week, rec. 1/week), yellow fever (leeches, 1/day, rec. 3/week), advanced leprosy (mummies, 1/day, rec. by spell). [21]

ADVENTURES

DUNGEON ADVENTURES

Climbing: Base 2-in-6 chance, plus Dex bonus, minus encumbrance level. Success travels half move rate per round; miss by 2 pips falls. Modify up or down for surface difficulty (handholds, spikes, slippery, etc.). [22]

Detection: Base 2-in-6 chance, plus Int bonus, for any character to find secret doors, find traps, listen at doors, etc. [23]

Doors: Base 2-in-6 chance, plus Str bonus, to open. Locks/bars are at –2, reinforced gates at –4, solid iron doors at –6. Limit of one opener per panel; special tools (rope, ram) allow sum of Strength bonuses. [24]

Drowning: Damage is 1d6 per turn without air, double if surprised. Per round is 50% to take 1 point of damage, or 1d3 hp if surprised. [25]

Falling: Damage is 1d6 per 10 feet, maximum 50d6, save vs. stone for half. Modify for hard or soft surfaces (water, snow) by 1 or 2 pips per die. [26]

Lighting: Torches and lanterns shed good light in 6" radius; dim shapes or glowing eyes to 12". Torches last 1 hour, lanterns 4 hours per flask of oil. [27]

Movement: Assume that searching and exploring time generally equates to actual game time spent. [28]

Rappelling: Climbing up/down a rope is at +2 chance (down is quadruple speed). Characters can haul a weight up/down equal to Strength in stone. Any sharp jolt is 1-in-20 to break a rope. [29]

Swimming: Base 2-in-6 chance, plus Str bonus, minus stone weight carried. Fighters and thieves are at +2. Success travels half move rate per round; miss by 2 pips sinks. Modify to taste for water conditions (calm, stormy, etc.). [30]

Undressing: Take 1 round to remove each: shield, helm, or backpack. Leather or chain is 3-in-6 to remove per round. Plate requires 3 turns with help. [31]

Wandering Monsters: Check every 15 minutes of real play time. Add a check for long searches for secret doors, etc. Roll once more on exit from dungeon. [32]

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Combat Modifiers: Attacks to the rear are at +2 to hit (no shield). Attacks when silent and unseen, or on stunned, stationary, etc. targets are at +4. Helpless targets are hit at +6 by missiles, or automatically in melee for max damage. [33]

Errant Shots: Fumbled or random attacks into groups are assessed with a d20 roll that ignores attacker skill and range modifiers. [34]

Helmets: If no helmet is worn, then 1-in-6 attacks are to the AC 9 head. [35]

Magic Item Use: Potions take 1 round to access and use (no move or melee). Scrolls take 2 rounds to access and use (no move or melee). Wands, rings, etc. take effect instantly (normal move, in melee). [36]

Magic to Hit: Every natural 4 HD permit striking as magic +1 to hit. [37]

Morale: The reaction table in Vol-1 is used for morale checks at each 1/3 losses. Roll 2d6 and add the NPC's level, and any Loyalty and/or situational modifiers. Results may be fight, withdraw, flee, or surrender. [38]

Natural 1: Roll of 1 counts as –10. On first attack of a sequence, check 5 in 20 for a result such as dropped weapon, trip and fall, errant shot, etc. [39]

Natural 20: Roll of 20 counts as 30. On any attack, score double damage (roll twice with all bonuses included). [40]

Oil, Burning: Lamp oil is not flammable, and cannot be used as a weapon. It can help burn other flammable items, e.g., paper, cloth, straw, etc. [41]

Poison: Failed save vs. monster poison means incapacitation and death in 1-6 rounds. Normal animals may have delayed or non-fatal effect. [42]

Saving Throws: All harmful spells give a save (half damage or no effect).

Shots at Groups: Attack rolls (including range, but before AC addition) below 10 entirely miss a man-sized target. Each adjacent man gives a 1 pip chance under 10 to trigger an errant shot against a random target in the group. [43]

Special Herbs: Garlic wards against vampires; wolvesbane vs. lycanthropes (save vs. breath to attack). Belladonna consumed just after infection can cure lycanthropy (save vs. poison to effect). [44]

Zero Hit Points: Save vs. death (immediate on hit; no interruption or help possible). Success indicates waking in 1-6 turns with 0 hp and incapacitated; any healing allows normal activity. [45]

RECOVERY & REWARDS

Healing: Natural healing regains a character's level + Con bonus for each week of complete rest in a comfortable setting. [46]

Magic Healing: Since clerics are unavailable, we allow for a source of *potions of healing* and *mithridate* (neutralize poison), such as an NPC alchemist. [47]

New Characters: On PC death, a new character may be rolled and join the party as soon as the current combat encounter ends. [48]

Treasure: Convert to the "silver standard": Read all values in gold as silver. Divide standard coin treasures by 10. [49]

Upkeep: Upkeep of 1% XP in silver is paid monthly; minimum 20 sp/month. If unpaid, effect as a *ring of weakness* (–10% attacks/hit points per month). [50]

Wands/Staves: Wands have max 20 charges, staves 40 charges. [51]

XP Awards: Monster base is 100 XP per hit die; this is adjusted for special abilities via the "Equivalent Hit Dice" (EHD) metric. Treasure earns 1 XP per silver piece value. Ability scores do not modify XP. [52]

XP for High Levels: Levels past Name each require an XP increment equal to the Name level, i.e.: 240K for Fighters, 300K Wizards, 125K Thieves. [53]

OED FUTURE EXPANSIONS

- Monster magnifications (see Vol-1 p. 8). [54]
- Revised monster level matrix (notes Vol-3 p. 10-11).
- Wilderness rules (incl. margin notes Vol-3 p. 15-19).
- Ship/naval notes (notes Vol-3, p. 28-33).

Original Edition Delta is compatible with Original D&D (1974) and similar game systems. For more information, and free updates to these rules, visit: www.OEDGames.com.

TARGET 20

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The given parameters for 0-level humans were used as the basis for various demographic Monte Carlo computer simulations; search for "Arena" articles on the blog at Delta's D&D Hotspot, and also the GitHub Code Repository. See blog 2015-04-06 for the history of 0-level in different D&D editions.

2. See Dragon #51 for a more sophisticated 0-level advancement (Lakofka/Wheeler; double XP levels found there, per Arena lessons). For better hit-die fidelity at level 1, multiply the original roll by ratio of the new class die (so, 4/3 for fighters, 2/3 for wizards), and round to nearest.

3. Ability score boosts are a result of survivorship bias, as observed in the Arena demographic computer simulations (blog 2015-05-04).

4. Hit point boosts are observed survivorship bias, as above.

5. Consider waiving this in campaign play, so that players can roll up new PCs as necessary without consulting the DM.

6. Spellbook creation can be abbreviated by use of the *Spellbook Generator* program (see blog 2017-07-08). This gives the "minimum" number of spells at the top available level, the "maximum" at 1st level, and interpolates in between. For NPCs, consider simply randomizing spells memorized; if the spellbook is discovered, it includes a like number of additional random spells, with duplicates discarded (see blog 2018-12-17).

7. Vol-1, p. 12 gives the maximum limit on languages as one per point above 10 Intelligence. This is in addition to common and alignment tongues. Remember that monsters are incomprehensible (and incommunicable) except to characters with the appropriate language!

   Mike Mornard makes the recollection at OD&D Discussions (locked thread) that at Gygax's table, all players took Neutral alignment, and were allowed to learn the Lawful and Chaotic languages, thereby communicating with all creatures freely. Contrast with Gary's italicized rule in AD&D PHB (p. 34) which expressly forbids that. We assume that foreign alignment tongues are not learnable, so there is value in learning many other racial tongues.

8. These guidelines add detail to Vol-1, p. 12 and Vol-3, p. 23 (esp. in regards to response rate). Compare to T1 Hommlet, in which 6/241 = 2% of the population seeks hire at the inn (all 2nd-4th level, mostly Neutral/Evil). Our model demographics are similar: 20% of population men-at-arms × 20% 1st level × 50% unemployed = 2%, and assume half response rate. Contrast with rules in DMG p. 34-35.

9. The expectation for half-shares of treasure is as per PHB (p. 122, modifier 1); it also echoes a standard "pirate code" (see Wikipedia: Pirate code). The half-share of XP is as per Sup-I, p. 13 (as well as AD&D PHB p. 39, DMG p. 85). Low-level NPCs with high-level PCs may seem less valuable, but they also face more deadly danger, so this simple split seems justified.

Suggested bookkeeping protocol: In DM binder keep short "Rogues Gallery" listing of all available hires, including alignments & personality. On hire session, DM tracks all statistics. For the next session, DM fills out full character sheet for player, keeping index-card record with: alignment, personality, employer, treasure share, morale.

Note that we prefer use of the term "hireling", as it's used in the LBBs (as opposed to "henchman" used in AD&D), and it's gender-neutral.

10. Hit dice are observed as d6's in the paragraph on Vol-1, p. 18. See also Vol-1 p. 5 where the expectation is to use many d6's, but only one d8 (or other dice). This is considered much simpler for the DM to manage in play. For other published modules, reduce monster hp by 25% (3.5/4.5 ≈ 75%).

11. Damage is noted on bottom Vol-1 p. 19 in revised prints (or else see *The Strategic Review* [TSR] #2, p. 3, FAQ para. 3). The addition of attacks and damage by monster type in Sup-I is not used (in particular, we frown on normal animals getting many attacks per round). For our specific interpretations, see the [OED Monster Database]. A work like the AD&D MM is generally compatible, noting differences given here.

12. This is equivalent to the –1 to attacks first seen in *Chainmail* (p. 29-30), when attack dice were d6; note that goblins are helpless against armored men in daylight. The –1 to morale still applies (morale always on 2d6). Of course, see Tolkien for the immense difficulty that goblins have in light.

13. Giant stone-throwing is noted as light catapults (Vol-2). In CM, light catapults fire every other turn (p. 28), and of giants it reads, "they can move on turns they don't throw missiles, for reloading for them simply consists of picking up a boulder" (p. 35). Strategically this makes sense; if boulders were thrown every round, it would never be advantageous to engage in melee.

Giant strength is equated to the range of 20-28. Optionally, the DM could roll damage with huge clubs as 1d10 + Str bonus. We also assume giant garb is similar to leather armor, with +3 natural skin toughness. Giants reward only base XP by HD (not worthy of any bonus).

14. OD&D is explicit that *charm*, *hold*, and *sleep* don't affect undead (Sup-I, p. 21). In AD&D, the *death* spell is barred (PHB p. 83), and monster descriptions generally also rule out poison, paralysis, and cold. We've tried to generalize those extensions here.

Gygax notes in *Dragon* #24 (p. 19) there is *no* saving throw for level drain; but we like the raised tension for the player making a save roll in such cases. Recommend setting the stakes and making players aware of level-drain at start of a fight. Lost hit points should be recorded, and like added if the level is regained. The XP rule is as given in DMG p. 119; this was also found to be the best in the Arena simulations (e.g., 1 point under level is regained at the end of the same fight, evidencing no real loss). Alternatively, one could simply halve the XP in the given class prior to name level; which would be more continuous, but the midpoint calculation can be done mentally.

15. This is as per the earliest OD&D printings and all later editions (AD&D, B/X,

etc.). Due to typography confusion, 5th Printing onward listed "½/1" in Vol-2, and "½/2" in the Reference Sheets. M. Mornard attests in play it was always (1, 2) as we have it here. See full story at OD&D Discussion forum.

16. The animals are basically as given in the AD&D MMI and MMII. Vampires have the highest XP value in the game, except for the eldest dragon types. (See blog 2016-04-04. Recall that we have no clerics or turning available.) M. Mornard recalls that for PCs confronting a monster with a gaze weapon, "Each player rolled a saving throw per round." (personal message via Facebook, 2018-02-05). Compare to the *Swords & Spells* 1:10 mass combat rule that "Gaze attacks will affect only the first rank oI figures in a sight range of 3" deep by 3" wide" (p. 16). Vampires are among the most dangerous figures in the game; they should be worth quintuple XP by HD.

17. Without clerics, *cure disease* is unavailable, so some allowance was necessary. The 1E DMG (p. 22) allows *remove curse* to cure lycanthropy in a specific circumstance. Re: mummies, see blog 2017-10-30.

18. See MM p. 31 for the technique of dividing dragon hit points for prorated saves, here extended to all other mechanics like attacks, etc. The *detect* and *fear* abilities are as specified in CM, MM, etc.; see also OD&D Vol-2, p. 16, under "Pixie". Arneson's *First Fantasy Campaign* gives the method of breath damage dice with hit points as maximum (p. 57).

There is some ambiguity on whether breath damage should be reduced by hits taken. OD&D seems to treat these qualities as separate silos ("per die", Vol-2, p. 11). AD&D is silent on the issue. B/X and the *Fiend Folio* explicitly reduce damage for hits. (N.B.: In CM and the pre-D&D Dalluhn Manuscript, dragon breath was simply save-or-die, as were fireballs and lightning bolts.) We find in surveys that roughly 80% of O/AD&D players do *not* reduce damage from hits. This is sympatico with our method of rolling a constant number of dice for each breath attack. See blog 2017-08-18.

19. We've run online polls (both on FB 1E AD&D group) that indicated different expectations for these abilities. A small poll indicated a preference for slimes sticking to victim after hit (N = 26, blog 2017-08-14). A larger poll indicated need for standard to-hit to consume metal (N = 73, blog upcoming 2022).

20. War horse restriction implied by Vol-2, p. 20. Light load is set at 20% of animal's weight; full load 40%. See research on blog 2017-05-11.

21. See Sup-II, p. 52-54. Giant rats don't have disease in OD&D (note Sup-I, p. 18), but do in all later editions. The damage mechanics seen here have been set via simulation to match expected mortality rates for 1st-level types. Consider Wikipedia: Miasma theory in relation to saves vs. breath here.

22. Base chance assumes sheer surfaces like well-maintained castle-dungeon wall, smooth rock cliff, free-standing rope, etc. Note speed climbing world record on standard 15m wall is about 6 seconds (see Wikipedia), i.e. 75' in one 10-second round. Our base unencumbered speed is 30' per round; consider allowing double speed at –2 to roll.

See blog 2017-07-17 for climbing rules through different editions (esp.,

AD&D and 3E). For using rope, see note on Rappelling. For a high-end simulation, use the Fontainebleau grading system as a base target number on d6; see Wikipedia: Grade (bouldering).

23. This matches Vol-2, p. 9, except for human listening scores. It bears noting that in traditional D&D (OD&D, AD&D, B/X), all of these exploratory d6-rolls (open doors, hear noise, find secrets) use a roll-low mechanic.

24. Chances here are similar to those found in Sup-I p. 7, AD&D PHB p. 9, and 3E. Giants are able to smash down reinforced gates in a number of rounds, depending on type (matches DMG p. 109-110). If needed, approximate monster Strength bonuses by HD/2.

    Vol-3 (p. 9) lets up to 3 characters force a door, as does DMG (p. 97), but the latter assumes an 8' wide door; same restricts a single character to doors around 3', which is more normal for internal single-leaf doors, and we assume by default. (See also DMG p. 60, Listening at Doors: 2½' of space per person.) This also makes sense defensively, to restrict rather than expand those entering. See also various YouTube "kick in a door" videos.

25. Overall effect is that average survival equates to character level, in turns (minutes). Compare to the Rule of three (survival) for air (i.e., calibrated for 3rd-level characters). The current record for non-oxygen-assisted breath holding is about 11 minutes; with advance pure oxygen breathing, about twice that; see OutsideOnline. Mathematically, the per-round surprise damage should be 1d3 – 1, but we simplify to 1d3 for dramatic tension.

26. See original 1d6/10' rules in Vol-3, p. 27 and 31 (aerial crash, naval fall). Contrast with guidelines on p. 5-6. The retcon to geometric dice in UA (p. 24-25) is not used. We recommend *Dragon* #88, "Kinetic energy is the key", by Steve Winter; see also Jason Thompson's comic on the Thief-Acrobat class. Real-world mortality is bimodal, depending on whether one's head is hit (justifies save for half damage; see also Vol-3, p. 31). A 6-second fall of 500' approaches 80% of true terminal velocity (hence 50d6). Taking air resistance into account, damage per unit distance would be reduced for higher falls on a nonlinear basis; maximum damage would remain the same, and the 1d6/10' rule is kept for simplicity. See blog 2018-02-05 and 2020-07-20. The save for half seems common in the OD&D community (per poll at [ODD74](ODD74)). See also Jim Hamilton's Free Fall Research Page.

27. Consider Scientific American article on torches (c. 1888), "In warm, dry weather, these torches when lighted last for two hours when at rest, and for an hour and a quarter on a march. A good light is obtained by spacing them 20 or 30 yards apart" [37.5 ft avg radius]. Compare to AD&D PHB 40 ft figure; note Vol-3 (p. 9) says "Players will see monsters at 20-80 feet". DMG establishes max encounter distance at twice the normal light visibility (p. 62), and says light notable around corner to 60' (p. 68). See related blog post 2009-09-08. See practical tests on OD&D Discussion.

    We also assume that infravision works on the same scale; clear to 30', dim to 60'. It's spoiled only when looking directly at a fire source. We assume the effect is analogous to thermal imaging; Gygax's understanding was taken

from the movie *Westworld* (1973; see blog 2017-08-10). Usually this is seen as a black-and-white image, starting with AD&D PHB p. 102.

28. If more specificity desired, consider: Every 15 minutes, one covers MV × 50 ft exploring, or MV × 250 ft through cleared areas. This exploration speed is about ½ mph for light foot; about twice that given in OD&D Vol-3, p. 8 (and four times AD&D). It is conservatively close to the average tour speed at Mammoth Cave National Park; and agrees with encumbered search rate for firefighters with heavy gear (1,000 sq. ft. per 5 minutes; see Maltman, "Searching Smarter", FireEngineering.com, 2001-02-01). We find this is also roughly the distance explored in real playing time. The accelerated ×5 move matches AD&D (PHB p. 102), and results in near normal walking speed of 2.5 mph. See blog 2017-08-21 for more.

29. See special rules for rappelling downward in the *AD&D Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* (p. 16-17), and mostly repeated in 2E PHB. For hauling capacity, compare to beginner deadlift standards (e.g., StrengthLevel.com). For risks and proper care of rope (e.g., heat, moisture, edges), see Wikipedia: Rope.

30. The chances for fighters/thieves roughly approximate chance to drown in Vol-3, p. 33. Compare to 3E, where swim was a class skill for fighters and rogues, but not wizards. Average real-world swim speed around 2 mph (30 ft per 10-sec round; similar to our unencumbered rate); record is about 5 mph (75 ft in 10 sec). Consider double speed at –2 to roll. See Reference. See video links of attempts at swimming in armor on the blog 2018-09-17.

31. See video links of dressing/undressing in armor on blog 2018-09-10. Putting *on* plate mail takes about 10 minutes with assistance.

32. The check is rolled in combat normally (noise counters the altered time scale). Multiple parties of monsters may attack each other. Consider: On a near-hit for a wandering monster (5 on the d6), give a vague clue such as echoing sound from a distant monster on the table. On the fixed real time increment, consider DMG p. 38: "Generally, time passes day-for-day, or turn for X number of real minutes during active play."

33. See *Chainmail* p. 25-26; Sup-I p. 4; DMG p. 67 and 70. Normally flank/rear attacks allow no Dex & no shield. We support applying all of these bonuses to missiles as well as melee.

34. This attack roll does include defender AC, weapon-type, and magic bonuses. In most cases this is simply d20 + AC and nothing else. The DM may opt to handle all of the errant shot mechanic for speed of play (and granted PC ability need not be known); and in a homogeneous group, determining the exact target may be unnecessary. For very long-ranged shooting against large groups, this is the default mode (see below).

35. See helmet rule on AD&D DMG p. 28. Note also that a helmet wards off many effects from the citical-hits charts formerly in use.

36. This is line with rules from *Swords & Spells* (table p. 11). Note that 3E and later rules are more permissive; they allow a combined move & spell action

(contradicting *Chainmail*/S&S/AD&D DMG), etc. See example of scroll use (2 rounds) in DMG p. 71. See note on staff activation (2 segments), p. 133.

37. Compare to DMG p. 75.

38. In brief, a total result of 9 or more indicates good morale. Use of the reaction table for morale is indicated in Vol-1, p. 13, para. 3 (reaction table on the prior page). Initial loyalty is modified by alignment as per Sup-I, p. 9. Consider that use of the HD modifier approximates the morale scores in CM p. 17 (and AD&D DMG p. 67); CM also explicitly notes that heroes, trolls, giants, dragons, rocs, etc. never check morale. High-HD morale is therefore much more robust than in B/X, say. See also *OED Book of War*.

Chainmail Man-to-Man (p. 26) says to check morale on every 33% of casualties. This is also the median in the mass loss table (CM p. 17), and compatible with the AD&D rule that morale from losses will only be checked twice (DMG p. 67), and likewise B/X (p. B27). See DMG (p. 36) for other cases: ordered to dangerous act, left alone, liege down, etc.

Note further that the *Chainmail* mass rules, referenced by the Man-to-Man rules, say that when the 2nd check increment is reached, the unit is automatically removed (see last underlined part, p. 17). This is emphasized by M. Mornard is his post on RPG.net (2015-04-19).

39. See note below on critical hits.

40. For the 20 as 30 rule, compare to DMG p. 74-75 with its 5 duplications of each 20 to-hit. See blog 2011-02-07 for analysis based on normal-curve skill model (suggests 10 duplicates); and also 3E DMG p. 64 (Variant: Automatic Hits and Misses; counts 20 as 30).

Previously we used fumble/critical tables from *Dragon* #39 (see blog 2012-07-30), but we discarded that in 2019 for (a) pace of play at table, (b) space taken on DM screen for the charts, (c) many results which would be punishing to PCs but not useful in their favor vs. monsters (e.g., limb, ear, eye removal), (d) lack of easy regeneration magic in OED to fix limb loss, (e) comparison to models of heroic literature (e.g., Conan, Elric, etc.), (f) Gygax comments on survival chances, and (g) player familiarity with other commonly related systems.

Gygax fiercely resisted criticals, but see his *Dragon* #24 article: "Terry Kuntz developed a system... To mitigate against the loss at a single stroke, he also included a saving throw which allowed avoidance of such death blows, and saving throw increased as the character successfully engaged in combats, i.e. gained experience. This sort of approach is obviously possible..." (a good description of the mechanic formerly used by OED).

On the other hand, at least person has recalled playing with Gygax in 1988, and observing that he gave max damage on a natural 20 (see blog 2021-02-01, incl. comments).

41. As stated, neither vegetable oil (used in real-world medieval lamps), nor kerosene (assumed anachronistically by Gygax) are actually flammable! They are combustible (igniting vaporized gas), but this requires heating to a

flashpoint of over 600°F for vegetable oil, 100-160°F for kerosene (unlikely without dedicated, fixed heating apparatus). See blog articles on "Burning Oil"; blog 2014-09-18; ENWorld Gygax Q&A 2007-08-06. Doused on other material, it serves to prolong the burning period (and hence more likely to spread flame). See [CulinaryLore](#), [KeroseneStoves](#). And also Dante, the *Inferno*, Canto XIX, lines 28-30: "Just as flame will only move to track/ an object's oily outer peel, so here/ the fire slid from heel to toe and back".

42. See AD&D DMG p. 20: "they kill the victim within a minute or so". See also Gygax's MMII, Snake (normal) for table of less-fatal poison types (hit point damage, incapacitation, etc.). Consider real life, e.g.: box jellyfish can kill in 2-5 minutes ([Wikipedia](#)), king cobra or brown snake in 30 minutes or an hour ([Reptile Knowledge](#), [The Conversation](#)), coral snake in a few hours ([Wikipedia](#); mentioned in AD&D DMG p. 81), rattlesnake bite in 2-3 days ([Animals.mom.me](#)). Of course, in these cases humans are not the natural prey; for giant animals in D&D, a better comparison would be venomous animal vs. natural prey (e.g., snake vs. mouse), for which poisoning may be more or less instantaneous ([Thailand Snakes](#)). Neurotoxins kill by paralysis and asphyxiation; hemotoxins by blood loss.

43. The rule for shots into melee is more permissible than most groups use; see blog 2014-04-14 (videos from SCA skirmishes), 2014-04-15, and 3E DMG, p. 65. Gygax seems to support the idea in *Dragon* #24 ("all of them are able to take an active part in the coming engagement; spells and missiles can be discharged from the rear or middle rows").

    Examples of the "errant shot" rule: If the target is in melee with only one opponent, then an errant shot occurs only if the pre-AC attack roll is exactly 9. If the target is in a squad of 5 other men, then an errant shot occurs on an attack of 5-9. If the target group has 10 men, then a roll of 0-9 indicates an errant shot.

    The DM should round to taste, and invoke this rule immediately if the range makes a normal shot impossible. As a rule-of-thumb, if the ranged penalty exceeds 10 + the shooter's level, they can only make errant shots.

44. The protection is only for an individual presenting or wearing the herb as a garland. Moldvay allows hits with wolvesbane to force lycanthropes to flee, but we consider this to be overpowered. See also [DHBoggs blog](#) on reconstructing original undead-turning effects (incl. with garlic, etc.; only warding from attack, not fleeing) See blog 2014-09-29.

45. We are told that Dave Arneson played with a similar rule.

46. Scaling to level is proportional to overall hit points; full healing time thus always averages around 4 weeks. This rule matches OD&D for 3rd-level PCs (½ hp/day; Vol-3, p. 35); or, AD&D for 7th-level PCs (1/day + Con bonus weekly; DMG, p. 82). Note a trend to roughly double natural healing in sequential editions of published D&D; see blog 2018-02-26.

47. Alchemists can create potions at half-cost (Vol-3, p. 22); compare to wizard manufacturing prices in Vol-1, p. 7 (250) and DMG, p. 121 (200, as XP). For

the poison antidote, see [Wikipedia: Mithridate](#); and compare to the *elixir of health* in AD&D *Unearthed Arcana*, p. 90. We give a 1-in-20 chance that any manufactured item is cursed (e.g., *delusion*; as footnote DMG p. 117).

48. Our experience is that it's beneficial for the player suffering the loss to be kept busy rolling their new character while the rest of combat plays out.

49. See money discussions on blog 2010-03-30, 2010-05-19, 2011-03-16; castle costs on 2017-08-14. Note that gem expected value is base 234, total 501 each; jewelry expected value is 3,410 per piece (per Vol-2 tables).

50. The basic rule is per Vol-3, p. 24. Rate is monthly as per AD&D DMG and the pre-D&D BTPBD manuscript (Part 2, p. 7). Rates in silver are reasonably realistic: see blog 2018-01-08. Recommend pro-rated assessment per game session; e.g., ½% XP per fortnight if that matches the actual gaming schedule. Consider using the average (median) party member for this purpose, and rounding to taste.

51. Compare to OD&D Vol-2, which specifies max charges for wands 100, staves 200 (p. 34). AD&D DMG flips this to wands 100, staves 25 (p. 132). Holmes keeps wands 100, staves seemingly without charges (p. 38). Moldvay Basic has max 10 charges for each (B49); Cook Expert has wands 20, staves 30 (X49). We feel that 20 charges for a wand is interesting as a resource-tracking limit, and note the example on Vol-1, p. 7: the *wand of cold* is 25 times as expensive as a scroll of *ice storm* would be (compare to DMG p. 122 where cost was increased by a multiple of 5).

52. See Vol-1, p. 18 for the 100 XP per HD principle; see TSR #2, p. 4, para. 1 for the kernel of the idea that a "monster is equivalent to its hit dice, and additional abilities add to the level in this case". Our EHD is assessed by Monte Carlo computer simulations; the alternative XP tables in Sup-I (B/X, AD&D, etc.) are not considered advantageous. See the [OED Monster Database](#) for full EHD listings. See [GitHub](#) for simulator code (application MonsterMetrics).

53. For Thieves this is explicit in Sup-I (p. 9), but for other classes Vol-1 is silent. The rule here is as per M. Mornard's recollection of playing in Gygax's games (see the [OD&D Discussion](#) board; and blog 2017-04-24). It is consistent with the tables in AD&D, but not B/X. Reconfirmed in Gygax's stats for Mordenkainen circa 1974 ([Playing at the World](#)).

    For comparison, consider Gygax in TSR #7: After surviving a real-world year of 50-75 games, a player should be 9th to 11th level. Expect 4 or 5 years (lifespan of Blackmoor or Greyhawk campaigns) for 20th level. In practice, no player in those games reached past 14th level.

    Also consider Holmes Basic D&D (p. 22), which has two paragraphs on treasure rewards and leveling velocity added by Gary (per Zenopus Archives): here he suggests 6-12 successful adventures to gain each level, and that 10-20% of adventures are failures.

54. Note that 1st print uses Balrog as an example; later prints use Dragon. See also FFC p. 52, "How to Become a Bad Guy".

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