

Taverns and Dungeons

Introduction

This game exists to provide a simple D&D type game that can be used to play [Strolen.com](#) and [RoleplayingTips.com's 5 Room Dungeons](#). In a sense, it's a hack of D&D flavor with some AD&D-style components thrown in for fun and then whacked up. It's designed for lazy play with a limited number of rules, and you probably will have to wing it a bit, but then again, maybe not. Like my D&D group did back in the good old days of role-playing.

The text isn't going to explain common role-playing terms, etc...

Setting

The world of Taverns and Dungeons is made up of two main types of locations. The first are the Taverns and the second are Five Room Dungeons. The realm's adventurers will find themselves carrying out missions to these five room dungeons, and they will find themselves recovering in the Taverns.

The land is a hostile place threatening adventurers with many types of monsters, traps, and threats. It's a hard job, but someone has to fight and then enjoy a nice cold beer afterward.

What's Needed for Play

You'll need a couple of d6s, paper, pencil, 2 or more players. One player takes on the role of the Bartender (Game Master), and the rest become players playing characters. One Moleskine cahier or similar small notebook to serve as the Bartender's world book.

Creating Characters

The player's characters are defined by a class. A class provides a general visual description of what a character will look like and a general description of the classes abilities. There are 12 classes in this game but feel free to create more as needed.

Ranger: Rangers generally dress in olive and green clothing with gold trim on their cloaks. They have high leather boots, light armor, and carry both a short sword and a bow. Rangers are in tune with the wilderness and are good in all things woody. Some can even commune with animals.

Cleric: Clerics wear lightly colored woolen robes, which strangely never get dirty, under which they often hide a club and light chain armor. They'll wear a holy symbol around their neck showing the deity they are pledged to. Clerics are holy men, healers and control mystical forces of good.

Mage: Mages wear tall pointy hats with decorative stars and moons. Their long robes are often gaudy colors like purple. They'll often carry a light weapon like a dagger with no armor, because it interferes with magic. Mages manipulate the world of magic with spells of all effects.

Warrior: Warriors are beefy handsomely rugged looking fellows or rough sexy rugged women that wear just enough armor to protect, but not enough to cover up their well toned bodies. They are really good at breaking and killing things.

Thief: Thieves tend to wear what the locals wear to blend in. They are good at sneaking around, stealing stuff, and finding hidden objects.

Assassin: Assassins like to wear all black and carry small vials of poison in their belts. They'll often have a sword slung over their backs. They're good at sneaking around and killing things.

Druid: Druids like to wear tight fitting see-through clothing with simple nature jewelry. They never wear armor or use metal and will avoid touching unnatural items. They are good at communing with nature and controlling nature magic.

Elf: Pointy ears, really really good looking, Elves like to dress in green, wear leather armor, and use a bow.

They look magical and talk in strange tongues. They are good at ranged combat, understanding all things ancient, and can use nature magic.

Dwarf: Dwarfs are short, grumpy, wear heavy shiny armor, and grow their beards to their bellies. Both sexes grow beards. They build dungeons and thus know their way around them, and despite their small size, they are hearty warriors.

Rogue: Shady, dirty looking street fighters, that tend to wear dark clothing, light armor, and mismatched gear. They are scrappy little street smart fighters that have a slight ability to use magic.

Cavalier: Cavaliers wear shiny plate armor, light colored capes. They ride white horses, often carry a lance, and use a long sword. They are brave, righteous, and well trained in the art of war.

Swordmasters: Swordmasters hail from over the seas. They wear their long hair in a pony tail, and wear robes that seem to float with their every moves. They also carry one or two swords. Swordmasters are the masters of the sword and masters of delicate movement. They often can out-think their opponents by staying five steps ahead.

Level

A character starts at level 1. They gain a level for each dungeon finished.

Wounds

A characters start with 6 Wound Points. If they take six points of damage they will die with one exception (see below).

Characters Abilities

When first played, characters don't have many skills or special abilities. They can basically walk around and talk. When a situation in play develops to the point that there will be some type of conflict, obstruction, a normal place where'd you roll the dice, a player may make up an ability to address the situation. This newly fabricated ability should be in keeping with the characters class. The Bartender can

reject an ability. Players are limited by the number of abilities they can make up during each season (See Table 1).

More than one player can choose the same ability, but the ability becomes limited to the first two character classes that use it.

A newly made up ability is automatically successful when first used, then it becomes increasingly harder to use until made permanent. An ability becomes permanent on its third successful use. After it becomes permanent, it becomes easier to use until it becomes automatic (See Table 2). At which point, the player can choose to lose the ability and gain two more or make it so that it works most of the time (See Advancement).

If roll fails before it becomes permanent, the ability is lost.

Number of Games Character Played	Number of Abilities Possible
First Two Games	4 New Abilities
Second Two Games	3 New Abilities
Third Two Games Onward	2 New Abilities

Table 1: New Abilities Available Per Season

Number of Times Ability Used	Successful on a 1d6 Roll
New and First Use	Automatic Success
2nd Time	1-4
3rd Time	1-2 Success = Permanent
4th Time	1-2
5th Time	1-3
6th Time	1-4
7th Time	1-5
8th Time	1-5 This Skill Advances

Table 2: Chance of Success for an Ability

Equipment

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Each player can produce up to 3 pieces of equipment per game. Equipment is used like an ability. During each season, one weapon, one magic item, and one miscellaneous item can be produced. Like abilities, when first created, its first use is automatically successful and then it become increasingly more difficult to use until it breaks (see Table 3). More than one player can choose the same equipment, but equipment becomes limited to the first three character classes that uses it.

If the roll is not successful, then it does not degrade.

The Bartender can reject any piece of equipment.

Number of Times Equipment Used Successfully	Successful on a 1d6 Roll
New and 1st Use	Automatically Successful
2nd Use	1-4
3rd Use	1-2 and it breaks after success

Table 3: Chance of Success for Equipment

Starting Abilities and Equipment

Before the character's first game, the player should make up one ability, which is a permanent ability and will be permanently ranked at 6th time use. This ability can never be lost and becomes the defining ability of that class. All future characters of this class must start with this ability. If a class already has a defining ability, then the player must take that ability.

The same is true for a piece of equipment. One piece of equipment becomes the defining piece of equipment for the class, it can never be lost, and it is permanently ranked at 2nd Use.

Playing

Play takes place in one of two places: a five room dungeon or the tavern. The Bartender tells the players about the area that they are in, what they can notice, and then the players make their characters do something, like explore or fight or drink or talk to NPCs. The Bartender sets up challenges based on the dungeon, and the players have their characters respond using equipment and abilities. Each dungeon is designed ahead of time and the players are led through the dungeon.

The Rule of the Dungeon

A dungeon must be completely explored before the characters can leave and return to the Tavern.

The Bartender

The job of the Bartender is to figure out what dungeon to play and then describe the different rooms in the dungeon as the players move through them. The Bartender also controls the monsters and non-player characters that are encountered in the dungeon.

World Book

The second job of the Bartender is to keep the world book. Before the first game, divide your Moleskine up into these sections:

1. Abilities
2. Equipment
3. Facts about the world.
4. Facts about the past.
5. Facts about character relationships.
6. Monsters

The first and second categories catalog all the abilities and equipment dreamed up during play. Make notes about how these items are used in play and which character classes used them. These abilities and equipments become limited by use to the first two classes that use them.

The Facts section are items that the players come up with during play, the Bartender records them, and then uses them to make the monsters stronger or make new monsters.

Monsters are recorded after they are designed and paid for.

Bartender Points

Bartenders get Bartender Points at the start of every dungeon. They can use these points to make mooks and Bosses. Bartenders' receive $2x(\text{the number of players}) + 1x(\text{each character's level})$.

Bartenders also gain points when a player turns a success to failure or when a character flees from battle. These are explained below.

Spending Bartender Points

A Bartender spend points to power-up the rooms. He can buy Bosses and Mooks for each room, power up traps, etc... Anything that could hurt a character must be powered up. Other than for monsters, the cost is 1 BP for every die of damage an item can do to a character. See Damage and Death and Healing.

The Rule of Conflict

Characters can run into all types of trouble when exploring dungeons, and at any point that the Bartender feels the character might not be able to do something, he may call for a conflict roll. The Bartender sets-up an conflict roll by stating the danger of failure and success.

Once the danger of failure and success has been stated, the player can decide whether or not, he will have his character attempt the conflict roll. If he decides to go forward, he picks an ability or equipment or makes one up. Then the player rolls a d6, and compares it to his character's ability's rank (see Table 2 and 3). If the roll succeeds, the action happens. If the roll fails, then the danger comes true. He can elect to still have the success come true as well as the failure by Turning Failure to Success. (See below.)

If a character doesn't have the right ability, he can elect to automatically fail and face the danger, and then he can can turning the failure to success. (See Turning Failure to Success.)

Turning Failure to Success

Players really don't like failing when they use their abilities and equipment, and creating facts is a way to

turn a failure into a success. After any failure on a dice roll against a permanent ability, the player can choose to create a fact about the world, the past, or about relationships between two characters (player or non-player). As a player makes a fact, he must rotate from world, past, to relationships before starting over at world.

These facts can really be anything. It should be cool and it must be a full sentence. After a player creates a fact, the Bartender records it, and the Bartender gains one Bartender Point to use to create monsters or make monsters stronger.

Players should beware, because more facts give the Bartender more points to turn into monsters.

These facts now become reality in the game world, so the Bartender can also introduce these facts into play. If the fact is introduced into play as a quest, task, or complication, when completed, the player can earn experience points.

Starting a Fight

When the characters walk into a room with mooks, a boss, or NPC, a fight may start if either one of the players or the Bartender declares a fight has begun.

Fighting

During fights, play is broken down into turns. Each player gets to fight in one stage of a turn. There are three stages that a character can fight in. They can either fight in ranged combat, move into close-quarters and take on multiple opponents, or fight one-on-one. Once each player has fought in one stage, the next turn begins. This continues until all the bad guys are killed.

During ranged combat, a character can elect to kill one mook using a ranged combat ability or equipment, or a character can use an ability or equipment to do other things. A ranged attack can do damage to a boss if successful.

If fighting close-quarters, the character takes on multiple mooks (players choose how many), and a successful use of an ability or equipment allows the character to kill multiple mooks. To determine how many mooks are killed during a successful use of an ability or piece of equipment, consult Table 4, and roll the number of dice indicated for the number of times the ability or equipment has been used. This is the number of mooks killed. If any mooks are left over, the character takes one point of damage.

Number of Times Used	Number of d6 to roll for Abilities	Number of d6 to roll for Equipment
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New and First Use	Automatic Success	2
2nd Time	1	3
3rd Time	1	4
4th Time	2	-
5th Time	2	-
6th Time	3	-
7th Time	3	-
8th Time	4	-

Table 4: Number of d6 to roll to kill mooks and cause damage

When fighting one-on-one, the character is fighting a boss monster. The Bartender must spend points to create a boss monster if a player decides to fight one-on-one and no boss monster is in the room. In this case, one mook becomes a boss. First, each player in the one-on-one, rolls a d6 to determine who goes first. The Bartender rolls for the Boss. The highest roll goes first. Re-roll ties. Then roll an ability, and if successful, roll the number of dice indicated in the appropriate chart. Each odd result equal 1 point of damage and each even result equals 2 points of damage. All the dice are added together and this is the total damage taken by the boss or the character.

Damage and Death and Healing

Damage taken is subtracted from the character's wounds. When the damage dice are rolled, each odd result equal 1 point of damage and each even result equals 2 points of damage. Total the points, and if the wounds left equal zero or left the character is out of the combat and will die unless another character has an ability or equipment to use to heal him.

After the fight, the character gains back all damage taken, except for one.

Once back at the Tavern, all wounds are healed.

Running Away

Characters can runaway at anytime if they add three facts to the game.

Mooks

These are easily killed bad guys. They are bought by the half dozen. Each half dozen costs the bartender 1 point. They can be placed in any room.

To make a mook, define the name, make a description up, give the half dozen one ability or weapon and record it in the World Book. Note that this is a mook.

If six or more mooks survive a turn, the Bartender must use a mook's ability or weapon. This ability or weapon succeeds on a result of 1 on a d6.

Example: Skeletons (mook) are undead fiends that look just like their name. They often have rusty helmets and swords. They have the ability to Regenerate all of their number.

Bosses

Bosses have wounds, abilities, and weapons. How many depends on how many points the Bartender distributes to it.

To make a boss, define the name, make up a description, and record it in the World Book. Note that this is a boss. Then spend points to determine the level of the boss. Note the boss' level in the World Book. See Table 5 for costs. Make up Abilities and Weapons for the Boss. Boss ability and weapons always succeed on a roll of 1-4. Weapons break after two uses. Damage caused it noted by level also.

Boss Level	Cost	Wounds	Abilities	Weapons	Damage
1	2	4	1	1	1
2	3	6	1	1	1
3	4	8	1	2	2
4	5	10	2	2	2
5	8	14	2	3	3
6	10	16	2	3	3
7	12	18	3	4	4
8	15	20	3	5	5

Table 5: Buying Bosses

Advancement

As a character is played, he gains advancement points. Advancement points are spent to gain more wounds, abilities, and equipment. The two following charts show when advancement points are awarded and also show the cost of items.

A character...	AP Gained
Kills a mook.	1
Kills a boss.	2
Explores one room.	1
Figures something out without fighting.	2
Follows through on a Bartender's use of a Fact.	3
Finishes a Dungeon	3
A player...	
Makes a cool Ability or weapon.	1

Table 6: Gaining Advancement Points.

Ability Desired	Cost
Extra Ability	5
Make ability permanent	10
Extra wound	5
Add a class	20
Subtract 1 from a roll	3

Table 7: Spending Advancement Points

Treasure

In five room dungeons, characters may find treasure. Treasure is used to keep a piece of equipment from breaking. Each room may have one treasure. Roll a d6, on 1-3 it has a treasure. If it has a treasure, each player that completes that room get one treasure point. Spending 2 treasure points will move a piece of equipment back one level. I.e. make a 3rd use become a 2nd use. And a 2nd use become a 1st use.

In the Tavern

Back at the Tavern, the players will hear about their next dungeon. They will be completely healed. And they can drink. Each time a character makes it back to the Tavern, he gains a level. Dungeon explorations that require a hook start in the Tavern, otherwise the players just find themselves at the dungeon or on the way.

Credits

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