

Combat

Combat occurs when one or more creatures attack another creature or group of creatures. Since the stakes are at their highest in combat, time in the game slows down to make sure everyone participating has a chance to contribute to the outcome.

The Battlefield

Before combat begins, the GM sets up the scene and tells you the important details about the battlefield: the area where the combat will take place. The GM might sketch out the battlefield on paper or a wet-erase surface, use a map, or just describe it.

Exact positions are more important for some groups than others, but everyone should at least have an idea about where their characters are when the combat starts. The GM might decide where everyone is, based on what was happening when hostilities broke out, or ask the players. Some groups use miniatures, tokens, or coins to keep track of positions, while others let the whole thing unfold in their imagination.

Awareness and Surprise

Most times, the creatures being attacked are aware of their attackers. If creatures on one side were hidden from the other, appear out of nowhere, or catch the other side sleeping or otherwise engaged, there's a chance for surprise.

When the GM decides surprise is possible, everyone on the side that could be surprised makes a Perception resistance roll. Each creature that gets a failure on the roll becomes surprised until the end of the first round.

Anatomy of a Round

Combat is resolved in 10-second units of time, called **rounds**. A round has three parts: fast turns, slow turns, and the end of the round.

During each round, players who want to take a turn (fast or slow) do so in that part of the round, in any order they choose. Once a player finishes his or her turn, he or she cannot take another turn until after the end of that round. If players cannot decide who goes first, the GM might decide or have each conflicting player roll a d6, with priority going to the highest result.

Once all the players have finished taking their turns during a part of the round, creatures under the GM's control may take turns in that part, in any order. Once a creature finishes its turn, it cannot take another turn until after the end of that round.

Fast Turns

A creature that takes a fast turn can either use an **action** or **move** up to its Speed. It cannot do both.

Slow Turns

A creature that takes a slow turn can both use an **action** and **move** up to its Speed. It may use an action at any point during its movement.

End of the Round

The end of the round marks the transition from one round to the next. Certain effects are resolved at the end of the round. As with other parts of the round, the players resolve any effects they created or that affect them first. Then the GM resolves end-of-round effects for creatures and effects he or she controls.

Combat ends when all creatures on one side surrender, flee, or lie dead. Otherwise, a new round begins and combat continues.

First Round: Before the first round begins, resolve any effects that were already ongoing and that check for the end of a round. Then combat proceeds as normal.

Turn Token

One way to help keep track of fast turns and slow turns is to use a two-sided turn token, such as a coin, poker chip, or card. One side represents fast turns and is face up at the start of the round; the other represents slow turns. Once everyone who wishes to has taken a fast turn, the GM takes any fast turns and flips over the token. Any remaining players and GM-controlled creatures do the same during slow turns. After resolving any effects at the end of the round, the GM flips the token back to the fast turns side.

Example of a Round

Shawn (playing a human warrior), Angela (a human rogue), Jerry (a human magician), and David (a human priest) form a group. Their characters are exploring an old ruin. Four giant rats emerge from the shadows to attack. No one is surprised, and combat begins.

Fast Turns

The players choose whether to act first. Jerry decides to take a fast turn and uses an action to attack a rat with a spell, killing it.

Shawn takes a fast turn, using an action to charge one of the rats.

Angela and David wait for slow turns.

Now that all the players who chose to act have done so, the GM can take fast turns with one or more of the rats. The rat that Shawn charged uses an action to attack Shawn's character. The rest of the rats wait for slow turns.

Slow Turns

Again, the players act first. Since Angela and David have not yet taken their turns, they do so now. Angela moves up to the rat Shawn is fighting and then attacks it with her small sword. David moves up to the same rat and attacks it with his battleaxe. The rat dies.

Now the last two rats take their turns to move up and attack Angela and David. Unfortunately, David's character takes enough damage to become incapacitated and disabled.

End of the Round

David has to roll a d6 to see what happens to his character. He rolls a 3. His character remains disabled.

No other effects check for the end of the round, so a new round begins.

Movement

When you take your turn, you may move up to your Speed in yards. On a fast turn, you move instead of using

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an action. On a slow turn, you can move in addition to using an action, which you can do at any point during your movement.

Special Movement

While moving on your turn, you can balance, climb, jump, swim, sneak, or perform any other special form of movement normally available to you.

Falling Prone and Standing Up

You can use part of your move to stand up or drop prone. Doing so takes half your movement.

Mounting and Dismounting

You can use your movement to climb onto or off of a willing steed. Doing so takes half your movement.

Actions

An action describes an activity you can perform on your turn. Common actions include the following:

- Attack
- Cast a utility spell
- Concentrate
- Defend
- End a spell
- Escape
- Find
- Help
- Hide
- Prepare an action
- Reload
- Retreat
- Rush
- Stabilize
- Use an Item

Attack

You use a weapon, cast an attack spell, swing with your fists, or do something else to harm or hinder another creature or an object. See “Making Attacks,” below, for how to resolve this action.

Cast a Utility Spell

You cast a **utility spell** (one that doesn’t count as an attack) and resolve its effects. The “Magic” chapter in the rulebook has further details about casting spells.

Concentrate

Some spell effects require you to concentrate to keep them going. If you concentrate on a spell effect, the effect continues until the end of the next round, up to the maximum amount of time allowed by the spell.

Breaking Concentration: If you take damage or gain Insanity while you concentrate, you must make a Willpower resistance roll. On a failure, you stop concentrating and the effect ends.

Defend

When you take this action, until the end of the round, all attack rolls are made against you with one bane and you make all resistance rolls with one boon. These benefits

end if you are prevented from using actions, such as when you become dazed, stunned, or incapacitated.

End a Spell

Choose one spell that you have cast that has a duration other than instantaneous or permanent. The spell ends.

Escape

You can use this action if you are grabbed. Make a Strength or Agility attack roll against the Strength of the creature that has grabbed you. On a success, the grab ends and you may move up to half your Speed. This movement does not trigger free attacks from the creature that grabbed you.

Find

You attempt to locate a hidden creature or object. Make a Perception action roll to search for a hidden object. To find a hidden creature, make a Perception attack roll against its Agility. On a success, the creature or object is no longer hidden from you or any other creature with whom you share your knowledge.

Help

Choose one creature within 5 yards of you that can see you and understand what you say. Make an Intellect action roll. On a success, the target makes its next action roll, attack roll, or resistance roll before the end of the round with a boon.

Hide

You may attempt to hide when you are not being observed and when you are at least heavily obscured or have cover from an object (see “Cover”).

Make an Agility action roll. On a success, you become hidden. You remain hidden until the conditions that let you hide no longer apply or you do something that would reveal your position (such as shouting, making an attack, or casting a spell). For example, if you are in darkness, you would no longer be hidden if the area becomes lit. Similarly, if you are hidden behind a wall, you would no longer be hidden if someone moves to a position where the wall no longer covers you.

While hidden, other creatures cannot perceive you. Generally, this means a creature cannot choose you as a target for a weapon attack or a spell, though you are still subject to area effects. A creature can guess at your location, making the attack roll with three banes. Even with a success, the attack hits you only if the guess was correct.

Also, while hidden, you make all attack rolls with one boon against the Defense or Agility of targets from which you are hidden.

Prepare an Action

You wait to take your action until a specified event occurs during the round. Choose an action to prepare, then describe the event that must occur to trigger the action. When the event occurs, you immediately resolve the action. If the event does not occur before the end of the round, nothing happens.

For example, Bobby takes a fast turn and prepares an action to make an attack with his sword against the first

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enemy creature that moves into his reach. When a hostile orc moves up to attack his character, Bobby attacks it first.

Reload

Choose a weapon you can reach that has the reload property (such as a crossbow). If you have the necessary piece of ammunition, you reload the weapon.

Retreat

You move up to half your Speed. This movement does not trigger free attacks.

Rush

You move up to twice your Speed.

Stabilize

Choose one incapacitated creature within your reach. Make an Intellect action roll, with one bane if the creature is dying. On a success, the target heals 1 damage.

Use an Item

You interact with an item you are holding or wearing, or with an object you can reach. Examples include picking a lock, retrieving an object from a pouch or backpack, or lighting a torch.

Other Actions

You can try to do something that's not described here. You are limited only by your imagination. When you attempt something that lies outside the rules, the GM decides if the activity is possible and how long it takes.

Extra Actions

Some circumstances, spells, and effects let you use an extra action to do something. You can use only one extra action per round, regardless of how many opportunities you have to use an extra action.

When you use an extra action, you perform the indicated activity immediately, even if doing so would interrupt another creature's turn.

The **free attack** is an extra action anyone can use.

Free Attack

When a creature in your reach willingly moves out of your reach, you may use an extra action to make an attack against that creature, using a melee weapon you are wielding.

Minor Activities

Some activities are so minor that you can just do them on your turn without using an action, extra action, or movement to do so. Examples include dropping an item or picking one up, drawing or stowing a weapon, and opening or closing a door.

There aren't hard limits on how many minor activities you can perform in a round. As a general rule, you can perform one during a fast turn or two during a slow turn. You might be able to do more if you don't move or use an action on your turn, or if your GM says so.

Making Attacks

You make an attack whenever you would harm or hinder a creature or damage an object. Typically, you resolve an attack by making an attack roll. There are several ways you might make an attack.

Attack with a Melee Weapon

You make an attack with a melee weapon you are wielding, by swinging or throwing it at your target.

Choose a Target: Choose one target creature or object. The target must be within your reach or, if you're using a weapon with the thrown property (such as a javelin), within the weapon's range.

Make the Attack Roll: You make the attack roll against the target's Defense score. Typically, you use Strength for attack rolls using melee weapons. Weapons with the **finesse** property (such as a dagger) let you use Agility instead of Strength for the attack roll.

Resolve the Attack: On a success, the attack hits and you roll the weapon's damage die. The target takes damage equal to the result of the roll.

On a failure, the attack misses.

Melee Attack Options

When you make an attack with a melee weapon, you may choose one of the following options.

Guarded Attack: You make the attack roll with one bane, but the next creature to make an attack roll against your Defense before the end of the round does so with one bane.

Lunging Attack: You may increase your reach by 1 yard, but you make the attack roll with one bane.

Shifting Attack: You make the attack roll with one bane. On a success, your movement does not trigger free attacks from the target until the end of the round.

Unbalancing Attack: You make the attack roll with one bane. On a success, if the target is your Size or smaller, it must make an Agility resistance roll. On a failure, the target falls prone.

Attack with a Ranged Weapon

You make an attack with a ranged weapon you are wielding by firing its ammunition at your target.

Choose a Target: Choose one target creature or object no farther away than twice your weapon's range.

Make the Attack Roll: You make the attack roll against the target's Defense. Typically, you use Agility for attack rolls using ranged weapons.

You make the attack roll with one bane if you are within the target's reach or if the target is beyond your weapon's range but within twice that range.

Resolve the Attack: On a success, the attack hits and you roll the weapon's damage die. The target takes damage equal to the result of the roll.

On a failure, the attack misses.

Cover

Terrain and objects on the battlefield can provide protection against attacks with ranged weapons or spells that target things at a distance.

Half Covered: If an object between you and the attacker covers at least half your body, ranged attack rolls against you are made with one bane.

Three-Quarters Covered: If an object between you and the attacker covers at least three-quarters of your

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body, ranged attack rolls against you are made with two banes.

Totally Covered: You cannot be chosen as a target for any attack or effect.

Attack with Two Weapons

If you are wielding a weapon in each hand, you may use an action to attack with both weapons at the same time. You make each attack roll with one bane.

Attack with an Item

You can make an attack with a harmful item that is not a weapon, such as a bomb or a flask of acid or oil. The rules for using such items describe how to resolve those attacks.

If you attack with an item that is not intended to be a weapon, you make the attack roll with two banes. On a success, the object deals 1d6 damage if it is made from a material that could injure another creature. For example, a pewter mug makes a suitable weapon in a bar brawl, but a fluffy pillow isn't going to hurt anybody.

Attack with a Spell

You cast an attack spell you have learned. The "Magic" chapter in the rulebook has further details about casting spells.

Attack an Attribute

You can make attacks with your attributes to attack other creatures' attributes or characteristics.

Disarm

Choose one target creature within your reach that's holding an object. Make a Strength or Agility attack roll against the higher of the target's Strength or Agility. If you are unarmed, you make this roll with two banes. On a success, the target drops one object it is holding of your choice.

Distract

Choose one target creature within 5 yards of you that can see you. Make an Intellect attack roll against the target's Intellect. On a success, the target makes its next action roll, attack roll, or resistance roll before the end of the round with one bane.

Feint

Choose one target creature within 5 yards of you that can see you. Make an Agility attack roll against the target's Perception. On a success, you make the next attack roll against the target's Defense or Agility before the end of the next round with one boon.

Grab

You must have at least one hand free to grab. Choose one target creature within your reach that has a physical body (not a spirit, for example) and make a Strength or Agility attack roll against the target's Agility. If you choose a creature you are already grabbing, you automatically get a success.

On a success, the target becomes grabbed until the end of the next round. If you are prevented from using actions (such as because you are dazed, stunned, or incapacitated), the grab ends. The grab also ends if you

move or are moved to a position where you can no longer reach the grabbed target.

Knock Down

Choose one target creature within your reach. Make a Strength attack roll against the target's Agility. If the target is larger than you, you make this roll with one bane for each 1 Size it is larger. On a success, the target falls prone.

Pull

Choose one target creature of your Size or smaller that you are grabbing. Make a Strength attack roll against the target's Strength. On a success, you move up to half your Speed, and the grabbed creature moves with you so it remains within your reach.

Shove

Choose one target creature within your reach. Make a Strength attack roll against the target's Strength. If the target is larger than you, you make this roll with one bane for each 1 Size it is larger. On a success, you move the target 1 yard away from you, plus a number of yards equal to your Strength modifier (minimum total distance 1 yard).

Charge

You use an action to move up to your Speed. At any point during this movement, you make an attack with a melee weapon or with an attribute to knock down or shove a creature. You make this roll with one bane.

Attacking Worn or Carried Objects

You can attack an object that another creature wears or carries, making the attack roll with one bane. The GM might decide that certain objects are immune or resistant to some forms of attack. An arrow isn't going to break a sword, for example.

Situational Banes to Attack Rolls

One or more banes might apply to your attack rolls, based on the circumstances under which you make the attack. These are in addition to any banes or boons included in the attack. The following table summarizes the most common situations.

Target is . . .	Effect
Half covered	1 bane
Three-quarters covered	1 bane
Totally covered	Automatic failure
Partially obscured	1 bane
Heavily obscured	2 banes
Totally obscured	3 banes*
Weather, terrain	1 or more banes

*You must guess the target's location (see "Hide").