

# Shadowdark House Rules

## COMBAT

**Sundered Shields.** A PC may avoid the effects of a critical hit by destroying a shield they are currently wielding.

**Dual Wielding.** Fighters can carry two one-handed weapons. When rolling damage, both weapon dice are rolled and the highest value is used.

**Critical Hits.** A roll of a natural 20 in combat means that the attacker gets double-damage against its victim.

- ▶ Double-damage = Full Weapon Damage + (Normal Damage Roll + Modifiers)

## FUMBLES

A roll of a natural 1 on a D20 is a Fumble.

**Melee Attack Fumbles.** Causes a permanent -1 damage mod to the melee weapon or temporarily damages a ranged weapon being used (broken bow string for example). Damage is cumulative and weapons will need to be repaired or replaced.

**Ranged Attack Fumbles.** May also strike a different target in range, including allies.

**Stat Check Fumbles.** Causes a Crawling Die roll.

## CRAWLING CLOCK

When the characters enter a dungeon or other dangerous location a crawling clock starts. The clock begins at 20 and is reduced at the end of each round.

**Crawling Die.** Rolled at the end of each round to reduce the Crawling Clock. Maximum die values “explode” and trigger another roll.

**Darkness Descends.** If the party's light source goes out without another one lit, the Crawling Die type is increased (e.g. D6 to D8).

**Random Encounters.** A random encounter will occur when the Crawling Clock is reduced to 0.



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## EXHAUSTION

Exhaustion is long-term physical and mental fatigue.

**Gaining Exhaustion.** Things that can cause Exhaustion:

- ▶ Being reduced to 0 HP
- ▶ Running out of Rations
- ▶ Interrupted Rest with failed CON check
- ▶ GM's discretion

**Effects of Exhaustion.** For each level of Exhaustion, characters reduce their maximum gear slots by one. If all gear slots are full, an item of the player's choice is removed.

- ▶ 10 Exhaustion levels = PC Death.

**Removing Exhaustion.** A character removes all Exhaustion by spending at least a week of Downtime.

## RESTING

**Short.** Characters may spend a round and 1 Ration to regain HP equal to one roll of their class HP die. Doing so triggers a Crawling Die roll (if applicable).

**Long (8+ hours).** If in the wilderness, each character must spend 1 Ration and 1 Torch each. After Resting, characters recover all spells, stat damage, and 1 rolled HP die per level.

**Downtime (1+ weeks).** Recover all HP and spells, recover stat damage, clear exhaustion and other status effects.



## DEATH & DYING

**Wounded.** When a character drops to 0 HP, they suffer a level of exhaustion due to their wound.

**Death Timer.** Dying rounds are equal to 1 plus the character's CON mod. (minimum of 1). Any damage taken reduces the Death Timer.

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## LUCK TOKENS

Sometimes the GM awards a luck token to a player for exceptional roleplaying, heroism, or just plain coolness. Big sacrifices, moving speeches, or incredibly daring maneuvers might be worthy of luck tokens, whether or not the characters' actions were successful.

**Starting Luck.** Every level one character begins the session with a single luck token.

**No Limit.** There is no limit to the number of luck tokens that a PC might have.

**Abilities & Spells.** PCs may only gain one luck token from a given source at any time. They may be granted another luck token from that source once they use the existing one.

**Locked Fumbles.** Luck tokens *cannot* be used to reroll a natural 1 on a D20 roll.

**Fumble Reduction.** A PC *can* use a Luck Token to negate the effects of a fumble.

## LIGHTING A TORCH

- ▶ Lighting a Torch when you can see requires no check.
- ▶ Lighting a Torch in the dark requires a **12** Intelligence or Dexterity check at **Disadvantage** (since you can't see).

## SAVING THROW CONVERSIONS

- ▶ **STR** for **Hold** or **Paralysis**.
- ▶ **DEX** for things that are "dodgeable" like **Breath, Rays, Wands, Rods, Staffs**.
- ▶ **CON** for things that kill or alter your body like **Poison, Death, Petrification, Doom, Polymorph, Disease**.
- ▶ **INT** for things that require thought.
- ▶ **WIS** for things that test your mind like **Spells** or **Illusions**.
- ▶ **CHA** for things that test strength of personality or will.
- ▶ Adjudicate as usual, but if in doubt use **DC 12**.

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## MAGIC

**Spellburn.** When you fail a spell check, you can choose to fuel the spell with your own life force. To do this, you temporarily "burn" points from your current hit points

For each hit point you burn, you add +1 to your spell check roll. You must burn enough points to meet or exceed the target number, turning the failed roll into a success.

### Limitations and Recovery.

- ▶ **Immediate Consequences.** The reduction to your hit points occurs immediately.
- ▶ **Additional Cost.** The number of hit points burned to add +1 to the roll is based on the spell's tier. Tier 1 is one point, Tier 2 is two points, etc.
- ▶ **Usage Limit.** You can use Spellburn a number of times equal to your primary spellcasting modifier. If the modifier is 0 or lower it can only be attempted once. This limit resets after you complete a long rest.
- ▶ **Recovery.** All hit points that are lost to Spellburn are restored when you complete a long rest or by healing magic.



## GEAR SLOTS

Gear Slots work as written with the following differences.

**Worn.** A small amount of jewelry and clothing can be worn and not count against gear slots.

**Small.** Small items can fit three in one slot.

- ▶ A ball of twine, a jar of glue or larger pieces of jewelry that aren't worn would also fit in this category.

**Petty.** Petty items can fit ten in one slot.

- ▶ A spool of thread, a whistle or small pieces of jewelry like rings that aren't worn would also fit in this category.

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## HORROR RULES

**Horror Check.** Faced with a powerful and malign evil from the Outer Dark or an Eldritch Horror's impossible geometry and nonsensical biology, this check determines if a character's mind can endure the strain, creating consequences that reinforce a tone of fear and consequences beyond simple physical harm.

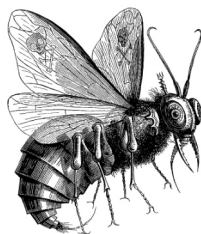
- ▶ Each character must test their resolve with a **Wisdom Check** against the horror's DC
- ▶ Those whose nerve has already been broken by a prior failure suffer **Disadvantage**
- ▶ An ally can use their Action to try and break through the fear with a **Charisma Check**, matching the DC of the original horror



\* With many thanks to Frank Mitchell - <https://frank-mitchell.com/rpg/shadowdark/house-rule/horror/>

## Horror Check Chart

| Result                       | Reaction                       |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Critical Success</b>      | Advantage on next Horror Check |
| $\geq \text{DC}$             | Act Normally                   |
| $\geq \text{DC} - 2$         | Roll 1d6 - 2                   |
| $\geq \text{DC} - 4$         | Roll 1d6 + 0                   |
| $\geq \text{DC} - 6$         | Roll 1d6 + 2                   |
| $\geq \text{DC} - 8$ or less | Roll 1d6 + 4                   |
| <b>Critical Failure</b>      | Roll 2d6 with Disadvantage     |



## Horror Effect Chart

| Total        | Effect                                                                                                                            |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1-2</b>   | <b>Scream:</b> Let out a single piercing cry that everyone and everything can hear and lose next action                           |
| <b>3-4</b>   | <b>Tremble:</b> Shake uncontrollably; all DEX tasks are at Disadvantage for the next 1d6 combat actions or the next crawling turn |
| <b>5-6</b>   | <b>Freeze:</b> Do nothing for 2d6 combat actions or the next crawling turn                                                        |
| <b>7-8</b>   | <b>Flee:</b> Run as fast as possible from the HORROR                                                                              |
| <b>9-10</b>  | <b>Fight:</b> Attack the HORROR or a nearby target in a frenzy                                                                    |
| <b>11-12</b> | <b>Faint:</b> Lose consciousness and drop where you're standing                                                                   |