

D&D Next Playtest Update

June 7, 2013

This version of the D&D Next playtest focuses on changes in the “How to Play” and “Spells” documents, as well as on the introduction of the gnome, half-elf, and half-orc. Although additional files such as the “Classes” and “Bestiary” file have been updated, the changes are limited to those necessary to bring the files in sync with the revised spells.

In the playtest, you are looking at portions of the game, not the whole thing. Because of that fact, you might find things in the rules that are unclear or that refer to elements of the game that aren’t yet in the playtest. Please let us know through our surveys what works, what doesn’t work, what you don’t like, and what you like.

Using This Material

If you are a player, here is the recommended order for reading the playtest packet’s documents:

1. **How to Play.** The rest of the playtest packet assumes you are familiar with this document, which presents the basics of play.
2. **Character Creation.** This document guides you through creating a character and points you to the packet’s other player-focused documents: Races, Classes, Backgrounds and Skills, Specialties and Feats, Equipment, and Spells.

If you are a Dungeon Master, here is the recommended reading order:

1. **How to Play.** The rest of the playtest packet assumes you are familiar with this document, which presents the basics of play.
2. **DM Guidelines.** A mix of DMing advice and rules, this document includes the nuts and bolts of setting DCs and crafting combat encounters.
3. **Bestiary.** Containing a selection of low-level monsters, this document gives you enough creatures to try out encounter building.

Races

- The rules for playing gnomes, half-elves, and half-orcs have been added in a new document called “Additional Races.”

How to Play

Abilities

The section on Intelligence includes a revised list of lore, as well as lists of languages.

Movement

- When you are prone, standing up now requires all your speed, rather than just 5 feet of it.
- We have clarified how to move using more than one speed.

Combat

- The rule for critical hits has been changed. Certain characters and monsters will have more potent critical hits.
- The dodge action now imposes disadvantage on attackers and grants advantage on Dexterity saves.
- The disengage action now lets you move up to half your speed. The previous distance (10 feet) defied any effect that changed speed.
- The help action can now be used to grant advantage to an attack roll.
- A hinder action has been added.
- Readyng an action has more focused uses than before and no longer requires initiative to change.
- The use-an-item action has been tweaked.
- The rules for dying no longer rely on negative hit points.
- Rolling a natural 1 for a death saving throw is now especially dangerous.
- The rules for short rests and long rests have been revised.
- The ethereal condition is now called the incorporeal condition.
- The prone condition has been simplified.

Magic

- The “Rituals” section has new rules.
- Rules have been added on casting a spell at a higher level.
- In the “Targets” section, a caster is no longer required to see a potential target. If sight is relevant to a spell, that fact is mentioned in the spell.

Spells

- The file contains many new spells.
- Every spell now has a Range and a Duration entry. Some spells also have a Material Components entry.
- Most of the spells have been revised in some way, especially lower-level spells.
- Each class spell list contains additions. Some spells have been cut from the cleric list, but will remain on certain domain lists.

Looking to Playtest More?

This playtest packet contains several adventures that use monsters from the bestiary. These adventures can supply hours of playtesting, but some of the adventures have not been updated in several months, and might require minor adjustments. Here are the adventures currently available:

- *Reclaiming Blingdenstone*, level 1
- *The Caves of Chaos*, levels 1–3
- *Mines of Madness*, level 3
- *Isle of Dread*, levels 3–7
- *The Mud Sorcerer’s Tomb*, level 14

You can also playtest at stores through the D&D Encounters™ official play program. Use the [store locator](#) to find a participating store near you. The current season is *Search for the Diamond Staff™*, which starts on June 12.