

MUNCHKINTM

MASTER'S GUIDE



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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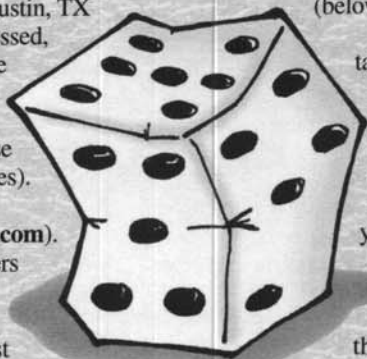
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About Steve Jackson Games

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *Munchkin d20*, the amount of said support to be set by court order at a later date. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us (and be sure it's big enough - we can't possibly mail Andrew to your house in one of those dinky little "reply card" envelopes). Resources include:

d20 Weekly (www.d20weekly.com).

Our newest online magazine covers *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Spycraft*, *d20 Modern* - and, of course, *Munchkin d20*. It is your first, best source of news about all *d20* releases, with articles, editorials, and reviews. *d20 Weekly* subscribers also have access to playtest files online!



New supplements and adventures. SJ Games continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. Check out our website (below).

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us - but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all releases, including this book, are available on our website.

Gamer input. We value your comments, for new products as well as updated printings of existing titles!

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for an online catalog, errata, updates, Q&A, and much more. More fun than any gamer should be allowed to have can be found at www.sjgames.com/munchkin/.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome, friend. We know what's been going on – the PCs with weird classes; the races that don't work the way you remember from That Core Book We Can't Mention By Name; the spells which are, frankly, stupid. We know that your game has been disrupted by silliness and grotesque puns. And we know that some of it is hauntingly familiar.

We know all this, you see, because we wrote it. Sorry 'bout that.

Yes, weary DM, this is all our fault. Your players picked up an innocuous little tome called the *Munchkin Player's Handbook* and proceeded to wreak havoc on your game, and you couldn't do anything at all about it, because you simply didn't know what you were up against. Obviously, what you need to do is buy the *Munchkin Player's Handbook* and this *Munchkin Master's Guide*. Right now. Then read them both cover to cover, and you'll be all set to put the fun back into your game. By which we mean, of course, *your* fun. Won't your players be surprised the next time they come over? (At least until they buy their own copies of this book.)

THINGS YOU'LL NEED TO PLAY

While we briefly covered this in the *Munchkin Player's Handbook*, we thought it important to give the DM some extra information that he can use whenever he feels like it. This is for two reasons:

- 1) It fills space.
- 2) It plugs a bunch of other things that you can buy with a quick visit to your Friendly Local Game Store. If you don't have a FLGS, or you're far too lazy to bestir yourself, please feel free to visit our Friendly Internet Game Store at www.warehouse23.com.

DICE

For some reason none of us will ever understand, the game system that this game system was based on used lots of stupid little cheap dice. Cheap, plastic dice that had numbers you couldn't even see until you filled the gaps with your trusty crayon. That's right, crayon. Why the hell they couldn't just use simple six-sided dice that can be found everywhere I'll never... what? Oh, sorry.

You need lots of dice – and lots of different kinds of dice – to play in a *Munchkin* campaign. From the trusty four-sided die that can be used as a caltrop to the 20-sider that shatters so very nicely on the pavement after you hit it with a hammer, *Munchkin* uses them all. If you don't have an assortment of d4s, d6s, d8s, d10s, and d20s, you can find them at your local game store (see above) or somewhere within six feet of any gamer.

I'm a Player, Not a DM. Is This Book For Me?

Sure! It's got all kinds of cool stuff... no sense in letting your DM have all the fun!

But Won't He Be Annoyed?

DMs admire players who come up with creative solutions, especially when they've proved that they really care about the game by purchasing *two* books for it instead of just one. If your DM does not remember how much he admires that kind of player, remind him!

Uh, OK, Then. Thanks!

Don't mention it. To anyone.

(Disclaimer: Steve Jackson Games takes no responsibility for foul DM moods caused by players owning copies of the *Munchkin Master's Guide*. Use at your own risk. Do not operate heavy machinery while rolling dice – they will probably end up cocked. Alcohol may have a synergistic reaction with the *Munchkin Master's Guide*, so you are urged to read this book in moderation while drinking. Do not attempt to stop fireballs with your hand. Ownership of this book may be illegal in certain small, backward communities; check local ordinances before purchase. Side effects may include small epidermal lacerations, watering eyes, and, rarely, incontinence. If any of these symptoms persist, hand the book to a friend and point out the really funny parts until you pull yourself together. Actual in-game use of any of the information contained within this book is not guaranteed to improve your game, and Steve Jackson Games makes no express or implied warranties as to its suitability for whatever lame-ass faux-theater excuse for a dungeon-crawl you may be running. Rolling three standard six-sided dice produces numbers in a Gaussian distribution from 3 to 18, centered on 10 and 11. Nyah.)



At this point we could get into a very detailed discussion on dice and rolling them, including bell curves, linear curves, and the time-honored tradition of not touching someone else's dice, but we won't, except to point out that there are an awful lot of nine-fingered gamers running around Austin who once touched Phil's lucky six-siders.

MUNCHKIES

Roleplaying just isn't roleplaying without the sweet kiss of fat and sugar. We recommend carbonated beverages (the more caffeine, the better) and sweet and salty foods. If the nutritional numbers on the packaging are the exact opposite of what they taught you in school was good for you, you have the perfect gaming snack. If looking at the numbers is going to take too much time, just buy your munchies at a convenience store. Also remember: Fried vegetables are still vegetables, so they're good for you.

MINIATURES . . .

You're going to want miniatures (and lots of them) to play *Munchkin*, if only so you can be absolutely certain you get every single attack of opportunity that you deserve. While you could use any number of the shoddily cast, inferior miniatures available these days, you (being a very intelligent gamer) will want to use only official *Munchkin Miniatures*, available now at the aforementioned FLGS – or, of course, at www.sjgames.com/miniatures/munchkin/. Why those miniatures, you ask? Because each one has special bonuses in a *Munchkin* adventure!

Super Munchkin: This is a male gnome. (Yes, even though gnomes weren't introduced as a *Munchkin* race until *Munchkin 3: Clerical Errors*. We are just that good.) You may, as a move-equivalent action, instantly transmute any weapon you are holding into a gnome chainsaw (from the *Munchkin Player's Handbook*). To undo the change, returning the chainsaw to the weapon you were holding before, also requires a move-equivalent action.

Warrior Wench: While using this miniature to represent your character, you have a +4 munchkin bonus to your AC. The Warrior Wench is a female dwarf (she shaved her beard, as it kept getting caught in her armor).

Spiky Armored Paladin: This figure is a male elf. Once every 30 minutes of real time, you may reroll one die roll. If you think you can get away with it, do this more often. If you're caught cheating, the other players at the table may remove this figure from play. For the rest of the session, you will be represented on the map by a four-sided die. You may avoid losing your figure, even when caught cheating, if you immediately give each player a dollar.

Munchkin Bonus?

Yep. A munchkin bonus stacks with any and all bonus types. Any other questions?

Leather Armor Babe: Woo, baby! As long as your character is represented by the Leather Armor Babe, you have a +4 munchkin bonus to Charisma. Even if your character is male. The *miniature* is an elfen female.

Killer Cleric: Using this miniature during a game grants your character a +2 munchkin bonus to Wisdom and the ability to cast *cure light wounds* once during the game session, or once more if he already had that ability. Trust us, you'll be thankful for that spell. The Killer Cleric is a male orc.

Halfling Wizard: You must, before rolling a die, scream "I'm a wizard." This draws attention to your game and ensures that any innocents in the area will think you're a group of complete idiots. Not that you'll care, because screaming "I'm a wizard" before rolling a die gives you a +2 munchkin bonus to the roll.

All Figures: You get these bonuses even if your character is not the same race and class as the miniature you're using. If races match, you get a +1 circumstance bonus to all damage rolls. If classes match, you get to – upon chanting "Neener, neener, neener," – take 20 whenever it is appropriate, but in half the normal time.

AND MAPS TO USE THEM ON

Now that you have miniatures, you're going to want maps to use them on. Maps with squares on them. Now you could spend lots of time exploring your FLGS, looking left and right and up and down in



search of maps . . . or (and we're only telling you this so you have more time to devote to your game) you could just buy our maps. For lots and lots of maps, visit www.sjgames.com/heroes/. No, please don't thank us. We're only trying to help you get to your game as quickly as possible.

Throughout this book, on the first page of each chapter, you will find a box like this, defining what is "open" and "closed" content. We refer the user to the Open Gaming License, on page 48, for a complete definition of these terms. The best discussion is available at www.opengamingfoundation.org, with lots of FAQs and other explanations of what the hell we're talking about here. The executive summary would be:

If it's *closed content*, it's subject to the full force of copyright law, whatever that is.

If it's *open content*, you can copy it into your own publications as long as you give appropriate credit. See section 15 of the Open Gaming License for an example of how to do this.

Neither of these terms has anything to do with whether you, the reader, can create a game using this stuff. We have, honest to Bob, heard people complain that they couldn't use material from certain d20 books in their campaigns because it was closed content. If we had merely gotten their names, we could have sold them Official d20 Content Openers or something, and paid for a trip to Cancun. But we digress.

THE MUNCHKIN MASTERS GUIDE

This is the book for the DM . . . or, as you may prefer to call yourself, the Referee, the Game Master, or God. This is the book that tells you how to use the power that is rightfully yours. Keep your players happy, if you wish . . . or abuse them like the helpless pawns that they are . . . you're in control.

Like its predecessor, the *Munchkin Player's Handbook*, this book has hard covers so that it may be used at need as either weapon or shield; it is glossy to withstand the spattering of blood, ichor, and carbonated Yoo Hoo beverage; and it is packed to bursting with the accumulated knowledge of many, many years of roleplaying on both sides of the screen. It is a mighty tome that you hold. Use it wisely.

Chapter 1 covers NPC classes. Even if you have the sort of players who slay everyone they encounter "just in case," this will give your NPCs some more creative responses than to bleed all over their tormentors. And if your munchkins occasionally indulge in a bit of roleplaying, this will give them a bit of fun.

Chapter 2 covers magic items. You might as well turn there now and read it. You know you want to.

Chapter 3 is the longest chapter of the book; it is a whole bunch of other stuff which we have simply entitled "Campaigning." This is because "A Whole

Bunch Of Other Stuff" annoyed our layout artist. Nevertheless, that's what it is.

Chapter 4 didn't make it into the book, and frankly, you should all be glad.

Tables at the back of the book will give you something to do with all those sparkly dice, and let you answer many of your players' questions without conscious thought.

If Merlin cleans test tubes in your lab . . .

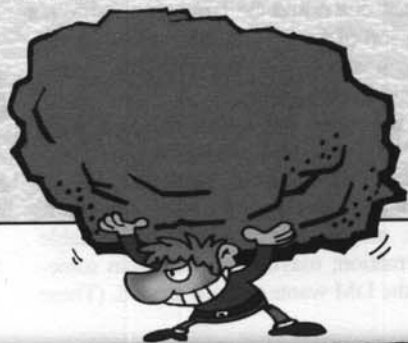
. . . you might be a Munchkin.

About the Authors

Andrew Hackard didn't learn his lesson last time and has come back for more. He remains the Managing Editor of *Steve Jackson Games*, pending a decision by the United States Supreme Court on the whole pregnant Chad issue. (Andrew swears he never touched him.) His addictions include CDs, DVDs, state quarters, and other round, shiny objects. If you would like to make Andrew a very happy man, send him nickels, as the brain-dead change machine down the hall never dispenses enough for him to get his caffeine fix. (He can make you a great deal on dimes, if you're interested.) Andrew would also like to apologize to Phil Reed and Steven Marsh, who submitted lots of nice bits for the *Munchkin Player's Handbook* and then weren't credited. *Mea maxima culpa!*

Steve Jackson would like to remind everyone that small plastic objects are not toys for children, so please send him any LEGO blocks that could otherwise end up in the hands of wee ones. It's all about the children.

Philip Reed isn't entirely sure how he got roped into this. (That'll teach him to miss staff meetings.) Phil would like to make this crass appeal for money even *more* blatant by plugging his own website, www.philipreed.com, where gamers not yet sated by all the other d20 paraphernalia on the market can purchase PDFs – or even real books, at least until paper becomes obsolete. Phil may be the sanest of the three authors, a prospect which should send tremors through Western civilization.



CHAPTER ONE

CLASSES

Open Game content in this chapter appears in boxes like this one. Everything that is not Open is Closed. There is no halfway point, no third state, no Neutral alignment . . . the universe is completely binary.

"But what about Product Identity?" comes a plaintive wail.

A gun fires.

Ahem. Elements of expression pass from Open to Closed without crossing the space between. The magnificent dichotomy pervades all existence. Closed or Open? Open or Closed? There is only one question; there are only two answers. For extra credit, look around the table and decide which of your friends are Open and which are Closed, and why. Discuss.

The *Munchkin Player's Handbook* contains rules for six classes suitable for player characters. These are all "adventuring" classes; some of them, in fact, will be less than welcome in a peaceful and law-abiding town. However, there are many people in a campaign who are not adventurers – the bartender whose pub the heroes trash, the court fool whom the characters insult, the street waif whom the noble wizard turns into a toad, or the guy whose only job is to haul stuff around and soak up damage for entirely too little pay.

All of these nonplayer characters offer opportunities for roleplaying, for meaningful interaction between . . . oh, who are we kidding? The typical munchkin will see some poor beggar as another opportunity for quick, safe XPs (to say nothing of alms), without the merest shred of concern for whether this beggar might be the key clue to a mystery three months hence. The smart DM puts no effort into designing them. On the off chance that a player asks for a description right before, or right after, he gaffs the guardsman like a fish, you can check the table on p. 42 once for jerkin color and once for hair color, and the table on p. 44 to see what sort of weapon the poor wretch drops as he screams, and that will make your munchkin very happy.

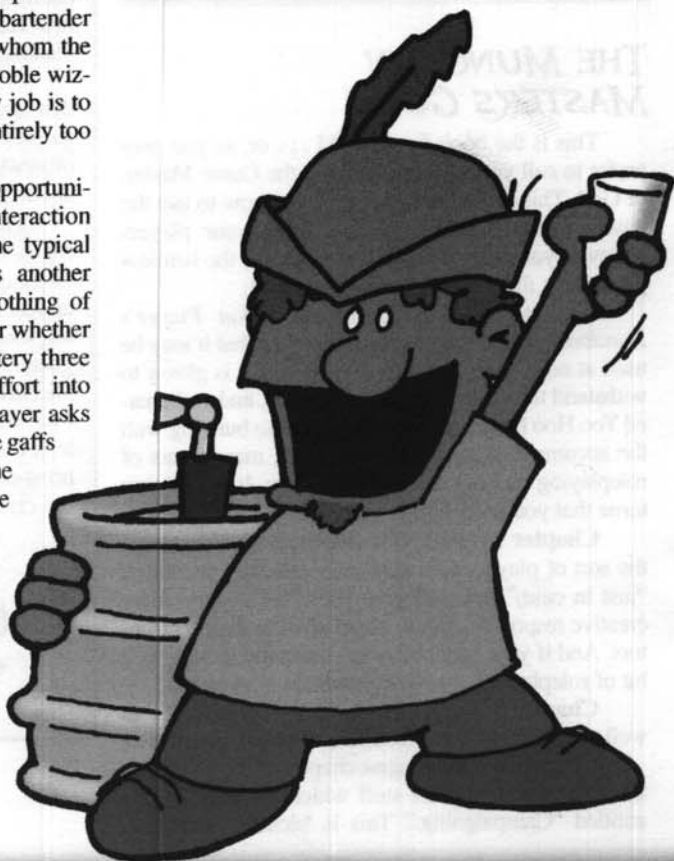
But now and again, the DM will want to give a third dimension (and a bit of defense) to some particular NPC. Maybe he's a contact the party will need later; maybe he's a source of valuable information; maybe he's just plain someone the DM wants to keep around. (These

last were usually the DM's own PCs, once upon a time – and they will never, ever, ever die. You're lucky if they aren't already demigods.)

For the DM who's having trouble keeping his vital-to-the-plot characters alive, we present the three NPC character classes most important to your Generic Fantasy Killfest. The next time a warrior shoves a beggar into the castle moat, won't he be in for a surprise . . .

BARTENDER

This gentleman will quickly become your PCs' best friend for a good and obvious reason – he supplies the ale. As they get to know him, though, they'll also learn that he is a valuable source of information; *everyone* talks to their bartender about their problems. It's part of the bartender's job to file those problems away until someone comes through the door who can take care of them. Then the negotiations begin, usually resulting in a finder's fee for the bartender, a rollicking adventure and a stack of lovely XP for the heroes, and one more person who owes the bartender. Favors are his true stock in trade.



Down at the Friendly Tavern

It's a roleplaying cliché to have the party meet, or have an adventure start, in Ye Olde Friendly Neighborhood Tavern. So you should do it absolutely as often as possible – first, because the players know exactly what to expect in a tavern, and they'll be looking for the start of the adventure; and second, because that will validate the time you drew the floor plan with a Sharpie instead of an erasable pen. "I knew we'd be using this tavern a lot," you will say. "I meant to do this. It'll save me a lot of time down the road." This has the advantage of being true . . . if misleading and devious. These are good traits for a DM to have.

The real question, however, is what you do with the PCs once you've got them into the tavern and safely soothed with a mug or five of gnomish stout. Having a mysterious figure walk up to their table and offer them a job has been done to death, so here are some other suggestions. Roll a d20:

- 1 The bartender delivers your drinks and mutters quietly, "I don't think the serving girl is who she appears to be." Then he quickly moves off.
- 2 The serving girl delivers your drinks and mutters quietly, "I don't think the stable boy is who he appears to be." Then she quickly moves off.
- 3 The stable boy delivers your drinks . . . umm . . . to the horses. "I don't think your riders are who they appear to be," he tells them.
- 4 Your horses deliver your drinks . . . oh, never mind.
- 5 Nobody delivers your drinks. When you go to investigate, you discover that the kitchen is deserted – and, in fact, doesn't appear to have been in use for many years.
- 6 The serving girl is in the process of delivering your drinks when she is accosted by the scruffy guys at the next table over, who start drinking your drinks.
- 7 Two blondes walk into the bar. You'd think the second one, at least, would have ducked.
- 8 Two ducks walk into the bar. The first one waddles over to your table and says, "I'd like to hire you for a job." The second one comes up behind him and shoots him in the back, looks at you, and says, "You're fired."



- 9 You walk into the bar. Sitting at *your* table, wearing *your* clothes, and drinking *your* beer are, well, you.
- 10 You see yourselves walk into the bar. You – meaning them – see you – meaning you – sitting at their – meaning your . . . let me try this again.
- 11 You see people who look uncannily *like* you walk into the bar. They look quite perturbed to see you sitting at *their* table, wearing *their* clothes, drinking *their* beer, and flirting with *their* girlfriends.
- 12 A large yellow chicken and a small woolly mammoth walk into the tavern. A little guy made of white metal delivers their drinks, then rolls over and whistles at your girlfriends.
- 13 You're in the town square, minding your own business, when Baba Yaga's bar walks into *you*.
- 14 A skeleton walks into the bar. He orders a beer and a mop.
- 15 A time traveler walks into the bar. He says "Stop me if you've heard this before."
- 16 Outside the bar, you hear someone yell "Action!" A black-clad figure with glowing red eyes walks into the bar, but trips over his cape. That same voice yells "Cut!"
- 17 Frodo runs screaming out of the bar. Sam chases him, saying, "Mister Frodo, she said 'Onion rings,' not 'Any One Rings?'"
- 18 Gollum walks into a bar. He asks the waitress, "Do you have any Guinnessssssssss?"
- 19 No one walks into the bar for a very long time. If the PCs check, they discover that there is now nothing outside the tavern. Not blackness, just . . . nothing.
- 20 A mohel walks into the bar. The bartender stops him at the door, bellowing, "I want to talk to you about that tip you left me last night!"

Bartender Class Features

Outside his bar, the bartender is treated just like a Munchkin warrior of equivalent level. However, *inside* his bar, he has an additional +10 circumstance bonus on attacks and does double damage on all successful strikes. Further, in his own bar, a bartender may pick up just about anything – beer steins, coasters, gnomes – to use as a weapon, with no nonproficiency penalties. It is not wise to mess with a man in his own bar . . .

Additionally, bartenders have the Munchkin bard's Knowledge ability. However, they have to "work their contacts" to use it, so answers to questions are delayed by 1d4 days.

You'd expect bartending to be a more lethal career, as many adventures begin with a rollicking tavern brawl, but your typical bar fight stays entirely on the customer side of the bar, where the furniture is harder and dirtier than the customers' heads. The bartender watches such affairs with cheerful amusement; it's part of the entertainment his customers expect, and he makes a few gold pieces on the side by booking bets on the fights. Trying to drag the bartender himself into the fray is an error that few make twice. By union rules, only retired adventurers can become bartenders, and to become a retired adventurer in the first place, you have to survive . . . which means that an experienced bartender is used handling far worse opponents than a drunken bard (as if there were any other type). And that's before he *started* adding levels as a Bartender.

Apart from that, however, a good bartender has a loyal clientele who will not stand for seeing their patron roughed up, ill-used, or even treated impolitely. At any alehouse worth the name, the regulars will rise in defense of their barkeep, saving him the effort of proving that he's quite capable of taking care of himself. They appreciate these small courtesies.

A bartender must be a good listener, able to hear what a person is *really* saying, as opposed to what their surface words are. *ESP* and similar spells come in quite handy here; the best secrets are the ones that you know and you know that the other person doesn't know that you know.* It's the rare bartender (and the poor one) who is not plugged into the city's gossip network in several different places – all those people bringing him different sets of news, none aware that the bartender is synthesizing all of their reports into his own picture of the city, nation, and even world. Bartenders *always* know what's going on before anyone else does.

OTHER CLASSES SAY . . .

Bards appreciate the performance space they often get from bartenders – almost as much as the free booze they get from everyone else. (The theory being, of course, that a bard who is drinking his ale is a bard who is not singing. This theory has quite a lot to recommend it.)

Clerics appreciate a good nip as much as anyone else, and priests of commerce or agriculture will be very pleased indeed with the bartender's work. They do wish they weren't called on to heal the tavern brawlers quite so often . . .

Monks don't spend a lot of time in bars, but they often have occasion, as they are passing by, to admire the grace and ease with which a bartender sends an unruly patron sailing out the window into the street. The *second-floor* window.

Thieves think that bartenders are way too uptight about that whole "profit" thing, and that they should just be glad they can provide a service to mankind – in this case, that service would be ale. Despite this ambivalence, when a thief is trying to run someone to ground, the bartenders are the first ones he talks to.

Warriors want more ale!

MAGIC ITEM:

EVER-LEVEL DRINK TRAY

This is exactly what it says; a tray which is always level, relative to the ground. As long as there is some form of support within a foot of the center of the tray, it will not tip over, no matter what force is applied. If the support is removed (for instance, if a barmaid has to use both hands to fend off the advances of the bard providing the evening's torture – rather, "entertainment"), then the tray will fall normally, with all the messy and liquid consequences thereof.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Create Wondrous Item, *levitate*; *Market Price:* 2,200 gp; *Weight:* 3 lbs. (not including the weight of any items the *ever-level drink tray* is carrying).



"I'll stop dunking you in the privy when you agree to stop grabbing my waitstaff. It makes them spill the drinks."

– Allan the Publican, explaining a nicety of tavern etiquette to a dwarven mercenary

Wizards also want more ale, and as the de-facto brains of most parties, they also appreciate a place where they can go to pick up information, hirelings, and tavern wen . . . we mean, information. But see the next section..

BEGGAR

They are everywhere – clustered at the door of a bakery, begging on street corners, sleeping in the small spaces tucked into almost-forgotten alleys. They are the ones who have lost or left their families, who have been forced into a life of squalor and poverty, who provide the counterpoint to the show of abundance and prosperity put forth by the ruling class. They're the ones who crowd out and try to "wash" the windows of your stagecoach with greasy rags, drawing back in confusion when they realize that there's no glass there. They are the beggars.

* Read that sentence over slowly a couple of times, moving your lips if necessary, and you'll see that it **DOES** make sense. If you need help, ask your bartender.

Or that's the theory. Actually, many lead quite comfortable lives; they're just out on the street begging because it's something to do, and because they seem to have a knack for it. The simple truth is that there's an art to accosting strangers for money, and the beggar is quite good at it.

Beggars also deal in information – though you can't expect to drop a copper or two in their cups and get their best intelligence. Precisely because beggars are so common, they are also often ignored, dismissed as "part of the scenery" by those who don't know any better. So street people end up hearing many things that were never meant to be shared with the common people . . . or, worse, munchkins. It just doesn't occur to a well-dressed noble, out on the town, that the rag-clad, ill-smelling figure is paying attention to his every word. (I refer to a beggar here, not a gamer.)

Typically, a panhandler will "own" a set part of the street. He will stake it out, day after day, not moving around very often. He will develop a relationship with the local cops or guards; as you might expect, the relationship involves the guard getting money and the beggar not getting beaten up or moved along. If the beggar is regular with his payments, he will even get some protection from nonpaying riffraff. The beggar will also know, and be known by, the local merchants; in exchange for small donations, he will squat somewhere besides right in front of their doorways, and will not snatch at the legs of the customers.

This makes it easy to find and get to know a specific street person, but remember that your local bums won't necessarily know information from across town. Their gossip tends to be very localized. Beggars do speak to each other, using a language of grunts, gurgles, and gestures which is unknown to most other people – and, usually, completely indistinguishable from a beggar's normal grunts, gurgles, and gestures.

To squat on another beggar's patch of land is a grievous offense, and word will get around town very quickly indeed. The offender may as well just pack up and move on down the road, and hope his reputation doesn't follow him there.

Munchkins are well advised to cultivate a good relationship with the panhandlers in their area (by which we mean, of course, giving them lots of ale money – or, for that matter, just ale). Entirely apart from their value as a low-rent spy network, gamins are quite loyal to those who treat them well, and will often be of use as guards, summoners of help, or witnesses at the munchkins' latest show trial for mayhem. ("Truly, your honor, these men were nowhere near the Saxon Violence that evening. I'm there every night, as you well know, and I never saw them.")

OTHER CLASSES SAY . . .

Bards think it is just terrible that people have to live out on the street, in the cold and damp, rather than be able to take rooms inside, where they will be better able to hear the bard's latest composition. Beggars, of course, know just how well sound carries, and are pleased to have the bard muted by the tavern walls. Financially, bards often depend on beggars for gossip.

Brother, Could You Spare a Name?

There are many possible names for this class, including almsman, bum, cadger, chiseler, dead-beat, derelict, freeloader, gamin, good-for-nothing, grifter, guttersnipe, have-not, hobo, indigent, loafer, lounge, mendicant, moocher, ne'er-do-well, panhandler, pauper, ragamuffin, scrounger, sponge, street arab, street person, stumblebum, supplicant, tatterdemalion, touch artist, tramp, urchin, vagabond, vagrant, waif, ward, and wastrel.

Why so many? Alas, there are a great many beggars in the world.

Clerics wish, truly, that there was something more they could do for the poor wretches, but there are just so many people needing help, and there's only so much help that the churches can give. How is one to choose among them? Far better for the church to be egalitarian and not leave anyone feeling slighted. If they really want help, the vicar's garden needs weeding . . .

Monks respect beggars as fellow meditators and travelers on the road to enlightenment. They know that sitting still, day after day, doesn't often pay the bills, but there's a certain quiet fulfillment in doing the same thing, all the time, and doing it pretty darn well. Good for them – and thank goodness the monastery stopped with the flower-selling thing. Whew.

Thieves know that beggars are a great way to find a local target for a midnight visit. That the beggars might have other skills seems to slip their minds now and again, though many a thief has remembered when he went to pay for a bauble for his lady and discovered that his purse was no longer on his belt.

Beggar Class Features

A *Munchkin* beggar adds his level to his armor class. They are resilient little bugg . . . ahh, beggars, explaining their d8 for Hit Dice.

Beggars gain levels by successfully begging. This seems intuitive, but you'd be surprised how many munchkins don't associate XP with anything that doesn't produce copious quantities of blood. Beggars gain 10 XP for every 1 gp they wheedle out of someone.

Additionally, many beggars pick up a couple of thief levels, the better to know how much loot someone is carrying and make sure to get their fair share of it. Reading lips helps them gather information, while Hide skill helps make sure they survive to pass along what they know.

Beggars have the same Knowledge ability as bartenders (see p. 7), but the delay factor on retrieving the information is only 1d4 hours. Since their sources are very different, it is never a bad idea to ask questions both of your local mendicants and your favorite ale supplier.

Warriors don't even notice that beggars are there. It's against the law to kill 'em (if anyone's watching), and they don't have the upper-body strength to kill anyone for you, so it does rather make them irrelevant to the fight, doesn't it?

Wizards are ambivalent. On the one hand, the beggars often know of recent and interesting magical displays, or of odd little items that might make good spell components; on the other, they are so unsightly squatting on the stoop of one's tower. 'Tis indeed a quandary. Truly evil wizards, of course, value beggars as experimental subjects, and will occasionally send their inhuman minions to snatch one off the street.

NOBLE

At first glance, nobility and munchkinry would seem incompatible; the noble lifestyle is all about conformity, tradition, and etiquette, while the munchkin lifestyle (if one may call it that) is about slaying, looting, and using the loot to buy better weapons to slay with. There's just not a lot of overlap.

This is misleading. Nobles don't normally munchkin out themselves, but they are more than willing to *hire* munchkins and send them to places they aren't go themselves. ("A dungeon, you say? Hmm . . . that sounds intriguing, but won't my cape get

dusty?") The noble will probably send one of his own retainers along, just to keep an eye on things, unless he has so much money that he's sponsoring the trip purely out of boredom. The retainer's job is to stay alive and report back when the expedition is over – if the noble can't get all the details of the adventure correct, how can he be expected to properly take credit for its success?

MAGIC ITEM.

ALMS CUP OF GUARDING

Only the owner of this cup (who is named during its creation) may reach inside or turn the cup over to extract the money without triggering its magic. Anyone else who reaching into the *alms cup of guarding*, or turns it over to spill out the money, triggers a shrieking noise guaranteed to attract the attention of passers-by . . . possibly including the city guard. It's a very effective deterrent.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *alarm*; *Market Price:* 6,000 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

Please, Sir . . .

Beggars are a valuable tool for the DM. Consider . . . an omnipresent, totally unthreatening observer who can help provide information or motivation, yet who is completely expendable. Here are some suggestions for using a panhandler encounter to put a twist on an adventure. Many of these work very well if the beggar is one they have met before, allowed to survive, and perhaps even become fond of. Some of them work even better if the party can't stand him . . .

Roll a d20 and consult:

- 1 A beggar brings you a tray of drinks . . . uh, wait, that was the last table.
- 2 You exit your inn/hovel/secret headquarters/castle/extradimensional laboratory and nearly step on a beggar, lying on the stoop. He's clutching a note with your name on it.
- 3 You exit your inn/etc. and nearly step on a beggar, lying on the stoop. He's clutching a note with someone else's name on it . . . in your handwriting.
- 4 You exit your inn/etc., yadda yadda yadda. He's clutching a note with your name on it . . . in your handwriting.
- 5-7 As 2-4, except that the beggar is dead.
- 8 You exit, badda bing badda boom, and see no beggars. Anywhere. In the whole town. A passer-by says that they just weren't around this morning.
- 9 You come *back* to your home and find a beggar sitting on the stoop, holding a note with your name on it.

- 10 . . . with someone else's name in your handwriting.
- 11 . . . with your own name in your handwriting.
- 12-14 . . . and he's dead.
- 15 You're nowhere *near* your little clubhouse and a beggar calls out to you from a doorway. "Inside this building is what you seek." His hand is outstretched.
- 16 You're in the marketplace. A beggar, even more filthy and odorous than usual, asks directions to the game convention.
- 17 You're in the marketplace. A beggar, wearing gloves, walks up and hands you a small metal sphere. The sphere is uncomfortably warm and getting hotter. The beggar's hand is outstretched.
- 18 As 17, except that instead of holding out his hand, the beggar takes a couple of steps backward and yells, "Thief! Thief! Stealing from a pauper!" He is pointing at you.
- 19 You step out of your favorite tavern, not having liked what you rolled on the previous table, and nearly step on a beggar, lying in the gutter. He looks exactly like you, even unto wearing tattered versions of the clothes you are currently wearing. Any valuables, weapons, or armor you are wearing are missing from the beggar.
- 20 . . . and he's dead.

"Alms, good sir? Alms for a poor beggar?
Alms for a poor beggar who knows who you were
out with last night and what you were – Thank you
kindly, m'lord, and a pleasant day to you too!"
– Jacky, showing off his
investigative skills



Many munchkins adventure for money and loot, trusting the fame to come later. Nobles already have the money (with which to buy the loot) and a title (which brings fame with it); what they want is a more impressive title, such as "King," "Emperor," or "Lord High Almighty." Something with *heft*.

Nobles can also motivate adventures in other ways. In many areas, they mete out justice to law-breakers, and often the laws are whatever the noble says they are. From public drunkenness to murder – or worse, poaching the noble's game – the scale of offenses and punishments is entirely in the noble's hands. This is certainly a way to have the noble interact with munchkins, who often find themselves embroiled in activities that would be considered, at best, "disorderly" in any civilized society.

Finally, the noble's primary job, at least as far as the king is concerned, is to levy and collect taxes. Munchkins are *certain* to be running up against this, over and over, and the DM is encouraged to let the noble's creativity shine forth in this regard. "Yes, I know you paid a tax on this gold statue once already. But, you see, you still have the statue in your possession, so I have to assess the, um, 'conservation of artistic resources tax.' Yes, of course you could avoid this by selling the statue, but then you would need to pay the, let's see, 'conversion of artistic resources to wealth' tax. What's that? Melt it down? Oh, I don't think you want to do *that*; that's desecration, and I'd have to fine you."

OTHER CLASSES SAY . . .

Bards think nobles are simply the bee's knees. After all, nobles have money to burn, and what better way to throw money away than by becoming a patron of the arts?

Clerics would prefer to have the nobility be the same as the church hierarchy, since temporal authority is meaningless as compared with divine power. Maybe then, the nobility would actually pay their tithes.

Noble Class Features

Gobs and gobs of money . . . and where money flows, influence follows.

In general, assume that a noble can scrape together his noble level \times 1,000 gp at any given time for expenses and need not account for it, as long as he's not being exorbitant about it. A mid-level noble can supply an entire adventuring party without even noticing the drain on the finances. A high-level noble raises armies before breakfast, sets them at each other by lunchtime, and lets the moans of the wounded lull him to sleep after dinner.

Additionally, nobles who finance adventuring parties claim a share of the rewards – and not just the money, as seen above. Nobles get the noble's level \times 10% of the party's total XP award to apply to their own XP total. At high levels, this can be truly staggering – but then, the noble needs to stay ahead of his employees if he wants to retain their respect, right?

A noble's level is also a rough measure of his position in the society. A first-level noble might, on a good day, be able to get his pick of the seats in a dockside tavern, assuming it was empty and the stevedores were on strike. A 10th-level noble can usually get the king's ear for a few moments at need. A 20th-level noble has the king's ear all the time . . . nailed to a plaque and mounted on the wall of what is now *his* castle.

It should be pointed out that there's no reason a noble *can't* go along on the adventure; it's just that so few of them *do*. A multiclassed noble, however, would make a fine addition to any munchkin party, as he commands instant respect from commoners in distant lands, has many contacts in the nobility and royalty which are simply not accessible to humdrum adventurers, and will be (because of the XP bonus) the most-motivated hacker and slasher in the group.

Monks see hereditary nobility as the sign of an immature culture, based on bloodlines rather than enlightenment and honor. Monks do not get invited to the best noble parties . . . or even the worst.

Thieves consider nobles to be ripe for fleecing. If it weren't for all those bodyguards they always have around, that is. Perhaps they'll all sacrifice themselves to save the noble's worthless hide, leaving the noble's purse completely unguarded.

Warriors have no respect for someone who refuses to fight his own battles. That said, there's something in this "send in the ground troops first" idea . . .

Wizards are in awe of the noble's ability to issue a command, even an obviously dangerous one, and have it instantly obeyed. It takes some potent magic for a wizard to be able to do that; the noble does it automatically. It's just not fair.

A Noble Effort

Some nobles don't know what's good for them, and will insist on coming on the adventure with the PCs. How do you keep him alive among the whirling blades, flashing spells, and general mayhem?

◆ *Put the PCs in charge.* If this is a minor noble, especially a scion of a large house, the heroes may be pulled aside before they leave on their perilous quest. Their charge is to show the little noble a good time without letting him get anywhere near actual peril.

This is a pretty standard plot, but you can put a twist on it. What if, instead of being a simpering fool who rushes gaily into the maw of death, the heir apparent is canny enough to appraise dangers and stay out of the ones he can't handle? What happens when this guy, having earned the party's trust, makes a *stupid* decision from inexperience – will they realize he's being foolish in time to stop him? Or, worse, what if he decides it's too much fun out in the world, and flatly refuses to go back home?

We realize that the above suggestion involves motivation, character development, and roleplaying, and would fit perfectly well in a serious campaign. Please don't tell anyone.

◆ *Play it for laughs.* If the noble is truly incompetent, even the PCs will notice. Adventurers aren't known for their shy, retiring natures, so undoubtedly they will comment. Eventually, they won't take the noble seriously at all, simply refusing to do things which they consider stupid.

This is fine . . . in the dungeon. If (or, more likely, *when*) it carries back over into the city, the noble will not take kindly to the equivalent

treatment – and he'll have authority to back him up. The first PC to make a "I knew a baronet who was so stupid . . ." joke will be swabbing the gutters in jig time. The next two or three adventures will probably feature the party trying to get back into the noble's good graces – or trying to find another patron.

◆ *Don't.* This is a gutsy option, but very, very munchkin. The noble was stupid enough to want to come along, knowing the risks, so bump his sorry butt off. In the first encounter. Hell, have him eat a poisoned mushroom during the first night's camp. Now, instead of an annoying live noble to schlep around, the party has a corpse – and that's doubly annoying, both because he will start smelling pretty rank in no time, and because his family will almost certainly want his remains for a dignified interment. On the other hand, do the PCs really want to be the ones to head back to town with a dead noble in tow? It certainly is not a good item for the résumé . . . which they will need to be dusting off, even if they are able to get the noble resurrected. Meanwhile, how to protect the noble from scavengers? DMs who want to go this route are encouraged to watch the movie *Weekend at Bernie's*.

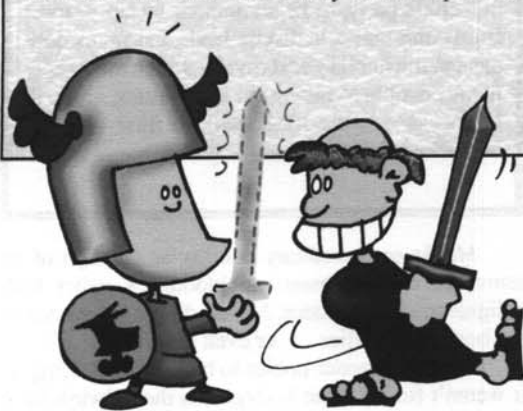
If this isn't truly awful enough, consider the possibilities in an undead noble, who blames the party for letting him die. Who's rich, petulant, and spoiled. And spoiling worse by the day . . . Or, to make it worse, what if the noble is a munchkin himself, and decides he *likes* being undead? How better to reward the party than to share his new boon? Or at least tag along with them . . . it's not like he can be killed *again*, after all . . .

MAGIC ITEM: SPY BROOCH

This is a small brooch, used as the clasp of a cloak or worn as jewelry on a tunic. A noble will typically give one to every member of an expedition he sponsors, ostensibly to mark them as employees of his house so they receive proper treatment on their journey. In fact, this item is a backup in case the noble's living servant is co-opted, captured, or killed. The *spy brooch*, upon command, displays a *silent image* of all the treasure collected by that person . . . in case the adventurer's accounting is, shall we say, faulty. It will display the *silent image* three times, after which its magic is expended. The *spy brooch* does not radiate magic (it wouldn't be much use to the noble if it did, now would it?).

While this description is of a brooch, it is possible to work this magic on any small item of jewelry, such as a ring or pendant.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *silent image*, *undetectable aura*; **Market Price:** 1,200 gp plus the price of the jewelry; **Weight:** insignificant.



"I'd be happy to join you on your little 'excursion,' but you see, I have to stay here in case the king needs me. You know how royalty is; the minute you go off to do something fun, they require your presence at court. I'd just be a burden to you all, constantly having to flit between that stuffy audience chamber and the thrill of the dungeon. So sorry. Have a lovely time."

— Baroneza Integra Wingates, to the adventurers she has just hired

CHAPTER TWO

MAGIC ITEMS

Everything in this chapter – with the exception of the words “the,” “and,” “munchkin,” and “peristalsis,” which are Product Identity – is Open Game Content.

Here you go, DMs – the mother lode. This chapter contains descriptions, creation details, prices, and XP costs for many items found in *Munchkin*, *Munchkin 2: Unnatural Axe*, and *Munchkin 3: Clerical Errors*. If you ever wanted to know just what it takes to make a *Sneaky Bastard Sword*, here you are. If you just want to give your big bad monster one to use against that obnoxious warrior, well, you can do that, too.

ARMOR

Buckler of Swashing +4: Feathered hat and poofy pants are not included . . . but otherwise, you are ready to swish your way through high society or get those timbers to shiverin', your choice. On command, the *buckler of swashing* gives you 3d6 temporary hit points, a +8 enhancement bonus to AC, a +2d4 enhancement bonus to Strength and Dexterity, and a +5 base attack bonus for three rounds. These powers may only be used four times a day. When not commanded, as above, this still functions as a +4 buckler.

Caster Level: 15th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *transformation*; **Market Price:** 200,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Chainmail Bikini: This is a suit (and we use the term advisedly) of “+0” magic armor. Wearing the *chainmail bikini* gives you a +3 munchkin bonus to your AC, even on the areas not covered by the bikini. Further, characters wearing the bikini get to take their normal Charisma modifier as a munchkin bonus or penalty to their Charisma – so if you have a Charisma of 18, with a +4 modifier, your effective Charisma is 22. Both pieces of the bikini must be worn for either of these effects to occur.

Note that while you wear the *chainmail bikini*, any 1 rolled on a Reflex save results in 1d6 points of damage, as the armor pinches you in a tender spot. Ouch!

Caster Level: 8th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *charm person*; **Market Price:** 17,250 gp; **Weight:** 10 lbs.

Coat of Arms: Do you always forget the last couple of words of your more-complicated spells unless you're reading it directly from your spellbook? Or would you like to be able to speed-load

your longbow? Or perhaps you just want to double your loot-shoveling time. No matter what your particular need may be, the *coat of arms* is ready to give you a hand . . . two, actually. You now have two extra, mechanical arms. They have Strength 18 and may take one full-round action each round. They function independently of the wearer, and commanding them is a free action.



Hey, Some of These Are Repeats!

You're correct. Have a cookie, smart guy!

Several of these items made their first appearance as mundane equipment in the *Munchkin Player's Handbook*. They are now appearing as magic items here. Needless to say, you shouldn't tell your players that *your* slimy armor is better than *their* slimy armor. Maybe they'll figure it out on their own . . . if they survive . . .

Caster Level: 16th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *haste*; **Market Price:** 160,000 gp; **Weight:** 15 lbs.

Gnomex Suit: This is a full-body suit of snow-white plastic, topped with a transparent glass bubble (elongated in front, for nose room). A gnome who wears this suit is immune to *all* gas attacks, as well as the special abilities of oozes, puddings, and other bits of ickiness. (There are a number of gelatinous octahedra in dungeons throughout the land, with perfectly preserved gnomes in *gnomex suits* trapped inside. They provide useful targeting points for area-effect spells, since the octahedra are themselves completely transparent.)

Members of other races who wear a *gnomex suit* just feel silly.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wish*; **Market Price:** 97,000 gp; **Weight:** 10 lbs.

Helm of Courage: Go get 'em, tiger! This helmet provides a +4 morale bonus to AC. On the other hand, a warrior wearing the *helm of courage* may not voluntarily retreat from a fight; he has to be dragged away.

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 7,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Horny Helmet: Not what you're thinking.

While wearing this helmet, you can lower your head and charge an opponent. Roll an attack for each horn (there are two); each successful hit does 2d8 damage, and your foe must make a Reflex save or fall down, stunned, for 1 round. The Reflex save is at -4 if both horns hit. You have a +2 enhancement bonus to AC for any round in which you do not charge. You are also at -4 to resist any Seduction attempts . . . just because.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength*; **Market Price:** 33,500 gp; **Weight:** 9 lbs.

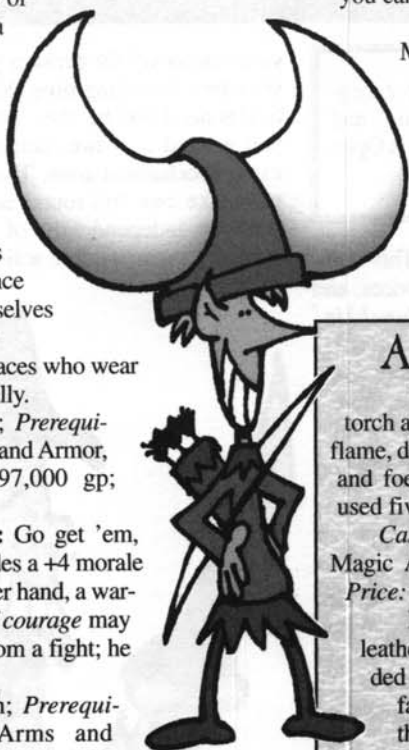
Kneepads of Allure: Tired of people helping you on their schedule? Looking for someone big and strong to soak up some damage for you? These beauties may well be the answer! They are command activated. You may immediately, as a free action, cast *charm person* on any character predisposed to find your sex attractive. The *kneepads of allure* also give a +2 enhancement bonus to AC. These powers only work if the kneepads are worn on the outside of all other clothing.

Caster Level: 8th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *charm person*; **Market Price:** 40,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Knight Light: Scared of the dark, are we? This handy little device can be mounted on any helmet, or simply worn atop your head, tied around your chin with a frilly ribbon. The item sheds light equivalent to a *daylight* spell, but only in the direction you are looking (unless you mounted it in another direction, which would be silly but very munchkinly). Note that while you can see where you're going, anything ahead of you can see that you're going . . .

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *daylight*; **Market Price:** 5,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Raincoat: It's one way to keep your armor from rusting! This provides a +1 enhancement bonus to AC, as well as a +3 enhancement bonus to all saves resulting from attacks by water elements and the like. It does, however, look



Armor Special Abilities

Flaming: You'll never need to carry a torch again! On command, this armor bursts into flame, dealing 4d6 fire damage to everyone, friend and foe like, within 10 ft. This ability may be used five times a day.

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *flame sphere*; **Market Price:** +5 bonus.

Leather: You are not wearing ordinary leather armor, oh no. This is special, zinc-studded black leather armor – and it protects you far better than you'd guess, from how little the armor actually covers. +3 enhancement bonus to AC, and if you happen to be using a whip, you do triple damage. Yowza!!

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *freedom*; **Market Price:** +3 bonus.

Mithril: It's some kind of ubermetal, that's all we know. This armor is made by elves (or maybe dwarves) and never, ever, ever given to outsiders (unless the plot requires it). You probably shouldn't advertise that you're wearing this, unless you're an elf (or maybe a dwarf) or you happen to be adventuring through a classic fantasy epic. +5 enhancement bonus to AC; piercing and slashing weapons do only half damage.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** +6 bonus.

Short, Wide: If you aren't a dwarf, this armor will not fit, not even if you're shaped like Rosie O'Donnell. If you *are* a dwarf, then strap it on! +3 enhancement bonus to AC.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *create food and water*; **Market Price:** +3 bonus.

Slimy: It's always just . . . icky. +2 enhancement bonus to AC and saves against fire and acid.

Caster Level: 6th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** +3 bonus.

extremely dorky, and magical oils may not be used on a character wearing a raincoat.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *protection from elements*; **Market Price:** 5,000 gp; **Weight:** 5 lbs.

Shield of Ubiquity: Tired of shields that don't protect you from the attacks you don't see coming? So are we! Fortunately for your inattentive hero, *this* shield provides a +4 enhancement bonus to AC on *all* sides, even your flank and rear. You don't even have to tie up a shield hand to use it – just strap it on your back and wade into battle.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield*, *wish*; **Market Price:** 180,000 gp; **Weight:** 12 lbs.

Skull Helmet: Not going for the subtle look this year, are you? This helmet gives a +2 enhancement bonus to AC and a +3 intimidation bonus to Charisma. Both bonuses are doubled if you are fighting a creature of the same species that, uh, “donated” the skull for your headpiece.

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 5,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Spiked Codpiece: The next person to make a “Are you just happy to see me?” joke is getting poked, good and hard! In the meantime, enjoy a +4 enhancement bonus to AC.

Caster Level: 16th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 45,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Spiky Knees: These double as extra supports when you kneel for any reason; you do not suffer any penalties for fighting from a kneeling position. They provide a +4 enhancement bonus to AC. These and the Kneepads do *not* interfere with each other; you can wear both. Powerful magic, indeed.

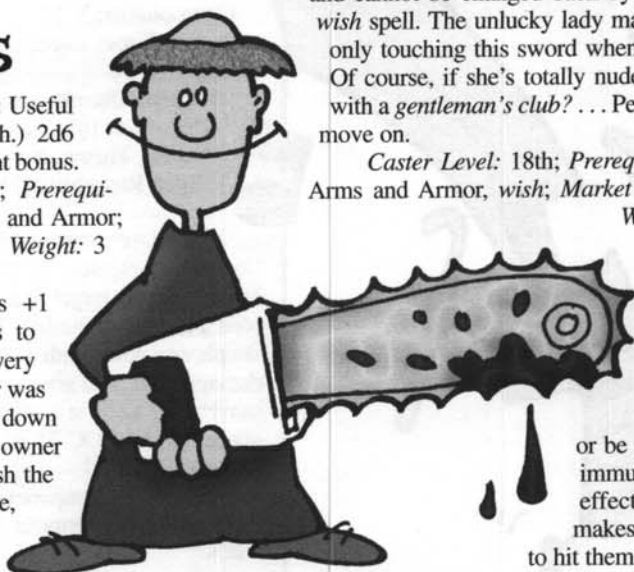
Caster Level: 18th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 18,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

WEAPONS

Barbecue Fork +3: Useful for grilla warfare. (Ouch.) 2d6 damage plus enhancement bonus.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 3,200 gp; **Weight:** 3 lbs.

Boomdagger: This +1 throwing dagger returns to its owner at the start of every round, even if the dagger was lost, stolen, or simply fell down after being thrown. The owner may voluntarily relinquish the weapon to someone else, in which case it “resets” to the new owner.



Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *magic missile*; **Market Price:** 2,200 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Broad Sword +3: Upon touching this weapon, any male is immediately changed to female and cannot be changed back by anything short of a *wish* spell.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wish*; **Market Price:** 200,000 gp; **Weight:** 5 lbs.

Chainsaw of Bloody Dismemberment: **WARNING!** Do not attempt to use hand to stop moving blade! **WARNING!** This is a +3 vorpal gnome chainsaw (see details on that weapon in the *Munchkin Player's Handbook*). Orcs may not use this weapon (or, to be precise, they may use it as a nonmagical orc chainsaw).

Caster Level: 18th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 128,000 gp; **Weight:** 6 lbs.

Dagger of Treachery: Watch your back! Oooh, too late . . . This weapon is a regular dagger +1 in the hands of anyone but a thief. For thieves, it is a dagger +3, and does triple damage when used to attack an ally. (This multiplier stacks with any other damage multipliers.) If the thief uses the *dagger of treachery* to land the killing blow on a teammate, he gets double experience for the encounter.

Caster Level: 15th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *magic weapon*; **Market Price:** 42,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Funny-Looking Sword: This wicked, funny-looking orcish sword deals 2d8 damage (and the +4 bonus). On the first round of combat, opponents must make a Will save, DC 15, or be flatfooted as they are overcome with the giggles.

Caster Level: 16th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 65,000 gp; **Weight:** 8 lbs.

Gentlemen's Club +3: Upon touching this weapon, any female is immediately changed to male and cannot be changed back by anything short of a *wish* spell. The unlucky lady may avoid this fate by only touching this sword when she is totally nude. Of course, if she's totally nude, what is she doing with a *gentleman's club*? . . . Perhaps we should just move on.

Caster Level: 18th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wish*; **Market Price:** 100,000 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

Ghoul Lash +3: This whip is made of rotting leather. When hit, the victim must make a DC 20 Fortitude save

or be paralyzed. Elves are immune to the paralysis effect, which usually makes opponents just want to hit them harder.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *hold person*; **Market Price:** 32,000 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

Hammer of Kneecapping: Bam! 3d6 damage! Double damage to medium and larger characters and creatures. On a critical success, the *hammer of kneecapping* destroys any magical kneewear.

Caster Level: 16th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wrath*; **Market Price:** 90,000 gp; **Weight:** 14 lbs.

Huge Rock +3: The magical weapon of choice for boulder warriors. (We never get tired of that joke.)

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 18,000 gp; **Weight:** 40 lbs.

Lawn Roller: Use this +4 item to flatten your enemies... particularly if they are made of grass. Note that this is a two-handed weapon, and that you must use the charge action when attempting to attack with it. Does 3d3 damage, plus bonus.

Caster Level: 15th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *mending*; **Market Price:** 32,000 gp; **Weight:** 43 lbs.

Mace, Foot-Mounted +4: The good news is that you have an extra attack while you wield this weapon (even above and beyond an off-hand attack, if you have one). The bad news is that you are at -6 circumstance penalty to Reflex saves and a -4 circumstance penalty to AC.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 32,000 gp; **Weight:** 6 lbs.

Mace of Sharpness +4: Yes, this is a vorpal mace. Yes, it's a bludgeoning weapon. Why shouldn't clerics be able to get in on the fun, hmm?

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wish*; **Market Price:** 162,000 gp; **Weight:** 8 lbs.

Rapier of Unfairness +3: When you attack with this weapon, the DM also rolls a d20, and he takes the number he likes better. Hence the name. What, you thought this would be unfair to the *monsters*?

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *commune*; **Market Price:** 32,000 gp; **Weight:** 3 lbs.

Singing & Dancing Sword +2: This shortsword was clearly created by a bard, as evidenced by its utter lack of musicality. This does not stop it, however, from singing – loudly and off-key – any time it is unsheathed. Heck, sometimes it sings inside the scabbard. (“The Battle Hymn of the Republic” is a favorite of the sword; as that song hasn’t been written yet in the world of *Munchkin*, it sings it very badly indeed.) It also acts as a dancing blade in combat, or any time it feels like strutting its pommel around. It is very fond of royal balls, and will try to extract itself from its scabbard as soon as it senses it is near one. Or two.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *sound burst*, *wish*; **Market Price:** 125,000 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

Slug Thrower: This is a +5 weapon. Too bad it can’t possibly do any damage (unless the slugs are petrified, or at least encased in a hard candy shell). The popularity of this item among the orcish clans goes a long way toward explaining why they haven’t overrun the civilized races yet.



OCTOPUS ARMS

Transmutation

Level: Wiz 2

Components: V, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Targets: One character or creature

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Upon casting, the target sprouts eight octopus tentacles, in four pairs. These extra limbs grant the target four extra actions per round (one per pair of limbs). The tentacles may use simple weapons, with a -8 penalty to attack and damage rolls. The arms are incapable of delicate movement, and the caster must make an Intelligence check at DC 15 to have any control over the tentacles at all.

Material Component: The rubbery flesh from an octopus tentacle. This doubles as a light snack.

Caster Level: 1st; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 20 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Sneaky Bastard Sword +2: The wielder may choose to cast *silence* as a free action, five times a day.

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *silence*; **Market Price:** 44,000 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

Swiss Army Polearm +4: Go read the description of the mundane version of this weapon in the *Munchkin Player's Handbook*. This is a +4 version of it. When you wield it, you must make a Will save (DC 10 + the number of rounds you have been in combat) or drop the weapon and dance a gay polka until the fight is over.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 32,000 gp; **Weight:** 10 lbs.

Tweezers of Terror: Any target hit with the *Tweezers of Terror* must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or suffer a -4 morale penalty to all die rolls for two rounds.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *fear*; **Market Price:** 20,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Two-Handed Sword +1: This is a longsword ... with two hands coming out of the pommel, each of which can wield a weapon of its own and attack at the wielder's base AC. These attacks do *not* count as off-hand or extra attacks.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *octopus arms*; **Market Price:** 120,000 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

POTIONS

Baby Oil: Much like *oil of slipperiness*, but lasts longer. +30 bonus to all Escape Artist checks; +4 enhancement bonus to AC. *Baby oil* takes 12 hours to wear off. Nothing can clean it off before the time has expired. No actual babies are harmed in the brewing of this potion – or at least that's what the wizards tell us.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *grease*; **Market Price:** 8,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

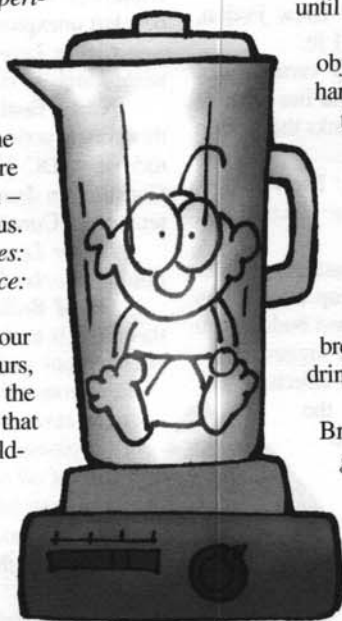
Cotion of Ponfusion: Lowers your Intelligence to 1 for the next 3d4 hours, and places you under the effects of the *ponfu* – er, the *confusion* spell for that same length of time. This effect is mildly addictive.

Caster Level: 8th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *confusion*; **Market Price:** 750 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Druid Fluid: This potent brew has three effects:

1) When splashed on any plant, the plant is cured of all damage suffered.

2) When mixed with 5 gallons of water and sprinkled on a crop (maximum of 1 acre), the crop grows to full maturity overnight and may be harvested the next



THERMONUCLEAR AIRBURST

Evocation [Fire]

Level: Wiz 9

Components: V, XP

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Really Far Away (1 mile + 1 mile/level)

Area: 1,000-ft.-radius spread

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: Yes

Upon completion of this spell, a massive nuclear explosion takes place somewhere in the sky above the point selected by the caster. Boom. This is just like *fireball*, except:

◆ It deals 1,000d6 damage to everyone caught within the blast.

◆ A pretty mushroom cloud remains over the area for about five minutes.

◆ Anyone still living is now radioactive. Yay! You glow in the dark now. Radiation sickness kills you in 1d6 days. *Wish* or *miracle* is the only thing that can heal you. Even if you are *raised* or *resurrected*, you're still radioactive, and will die (again) in another 1d6 days.

XP Cost: 100,000 XP plus 1 XP per point of damage inflicted by the blast. Any caster reduced to 0 XP by this spell dies immediately. You must roll damage for everything in the blast. Separately.

morning. However, this renders the field unusable until the next planting season.

3) When poured on any metal object, it corrodes it instantly, lowering its hardness by 5. If more than one application of *druid fluid* is used, the effects stack.

Caster Level: 6th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *plant growth*; **Market Price:** 1,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

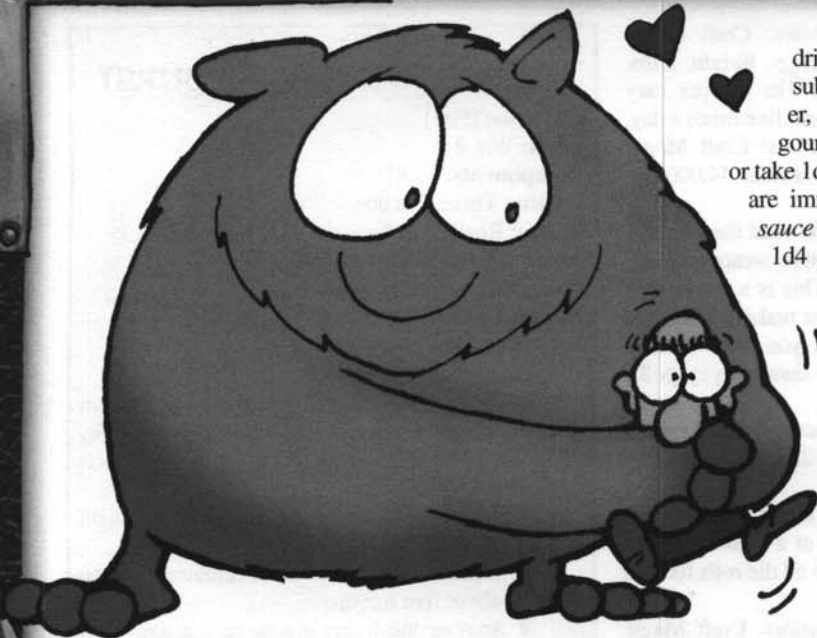
Electric Radioactive Acid

Potion: Any creature not immune to all three types of effects found in this brew takes 2d8 points of damage when it drinks this potion or is splashed with it.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *acid arrow*, *shocking grasp*, *thermonuclear airburst*; **Market Price:** 25,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Flaming Poison Potion: It's poison! On fire! Two great attacks that slay great together! If used as a grenade-like missile attack, creatures caught within the burst take 1d10 fire damage and 1d8 poison

damage, with a Reflex save for half damage. A creature who actually *drinks* this vile brew takes 3d10 fire damage, no save, and 3d8 poison damage, Fortitude save for half.



This oil may be added to food or drink to neutralize any poisonous substance contained within; however, upon consuming the item, the gourmet must make a Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of fire damage. Halflings are immune to this effect. *Hot pepper sauce* smeared on a bladed weapon adds 1d4 points of fire damage on a successful hit, but the oil is used on the first swing regardless of the attack's success.

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, poison; **Market Price:** 200 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Lemming Juice: This cursed potion makes the drinker extremely susceptible to suggestions, even (especially!) stupid ones. For the next 2d4 hours, a person who drinks *lemming juice* has an automatic 1

on all Will saves. An additional, unplanned side effect is that he will make a beeline for any cliff or clifflike precipice in the area. Friends are advised to keep him off the roof.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, charm person; **Market Price:** 1,500 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Liquid Wench: Before employing this depraved elixir, the user must sculpt a female form in metal, plaster, or other object that will hold its shape. He then pours the *liquid wench* into the mold, lets it cure for 2 days, and opens the mold. The newly solidified *liquid wench* is a construct with 10 hp, blonde hair, and no willpower whatsoever. Applications of this item are best left unexplored.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, wish; **Market Price:** 1,000,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Nasty-Tasting Sports Drink: Upon drinking this cursed potion, the victim must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 25) or suffer 1d10 points of temporary Constitution damage and an additional 1d10 points of temporary Constitution damage one minute later.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, poison; **Market Price:** 8,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Oil of Boiling: When any food item is fried in this oil, it is as though it were made by a master chef. Any poisons within the food are neutralized. However, anyone who eats this food must make a Fortitude save one hour later or be overcome with sleepiness. Further, sages report that long-term use of *oil of boiling* can have deleterious effects on your health.

Caster Level: 1st; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, flare; **Market Price:** 200 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Pollymorph Potion: Anyone drinking this potion, or splashed by it, is changed into a parrot, as per the *polymorph other* spell. Someone who drinks the potion gets no save; a person splashed by it may avoid its effects with a Reflex save.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, flame strike, poison; **Market Price:** 12,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Flask of Glue: It's, y'know, glue. Sticks things together. Poured on an area, any creatures walking through it must make a Strength check, DC 25, or become stuck until the glue dries 4 hours later. It can also be used to mend objects, glue gauntlets to weapons, glue visors closed, or affix shiny gems to the warrior's armor so he's a more tempting target. Gnomes use the *flask of glue* a lot.

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, web; **Market Price:** 4,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Freezing Explosive Potion: Any creature not immune to both cold or ice damage and fire damage takes 2d8 points of damage when it drinks this potion or is splashed with it.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, cone of cold, fireball; **Market Price:** 24,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Friendship Potion: Oddly, no matter the ingredients used, this potion tastes like cheap beer. When you quaff this brew, *everyone* is your best buddy! You are at -2 to Will saves, and at a -8 to the suggestion "Hey, let's have another pint!" These effects stack with multiple applications of the *friendship potion*. Its effects last for 8 hours. *Friendship potion* is usually sold by the keg, and the price given below is for that quantity. A keg holds 50 doses.

Caster Level: 18th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, mass suggestion; **Market Price:** 2,800 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Hot Pepper Sauce: It burns, Mommy, it burns!!!



To counter the effects of the *polymorph potion*, the parrot must be immersed in a barrel of rum in which 15 gp have lain for three weeks.

Caster Level: 8th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *polymorph other*; **Market Price:** 12,500 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Potion of Apathy: Does this potion have any effect? Who cares? Ho-hum.

Caster Level: 1st; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion; **Market Price:** 25 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Potion of Cowardice: A warrior, cleric, or monk who drinks this potion immediately flees, at his top movement rate, from the area where he drank it. He will not voluntarily flee into danger, and in fact will be looking for a nice, quiet, dark place to hide. Wizards, bards, and thieves – especially thieves – are immune to its effects.

Caster Level: 8th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *fear*; **Market Price:** 2,600 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Potion of Disbelief: This can't possibly taste this bad, can it? Maybe you should try it again.

Caster Level: 1st; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion; **Market Price:** 2 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Potion of Flight: Munchkins don't bother with simple fly potions. When they use this potion, they gain the effect of fly as if cast by a 20th-level caster, as well as a +2 enhancement bonus to all die rolls as long as the potion is in effect (which is a little over three hours).

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *wish*; **Market Price:** 25,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Potion of General Studliness: Upon drinking this potion the user gains 10 temporary character levels, which apply to his highest-level class. Good for him! These levels are lost in one minute. Better use the extra power quick!

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *wish*; **Market Price:** 75,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Potion of Halitosis: Upon drinking this potion, the wearer gains a garlic-scented breath weapon for 1d6 hours. He can breathe a 5-foot cloud of noxious fumes; anyone caught within its effects must make a Fortitude save or fall to the ground, retching and gagging. This precludes any spellcasting or fighting. Breathing the cloud is a free action.

Note that the noxious aroma generated by this potion lingers well after its effects have expired. Munchkins who use this potion in close quarters are well advised to carry mints.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *cloudkill*; **Market Price:** 8,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Potion of Idiotic Bravery: After drinking this potion you receive a +14 enhancement bonus to all attack and damage rolls for six rounds. It's such an outrageous bonus that you become over-confident; you may only make "called shots" during this time.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *wish*; **Market Price:** 26,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Transferral Potion: When you drink this potion, you suddenly become a much less attractive target to any monsters in the area, who will probably leave you alone and fight with your friends instead. Its effects only last 2d4 rounds, but that's plenty of time for you to get outta Dodge, right?

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion; **Market Price:** 5,500 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

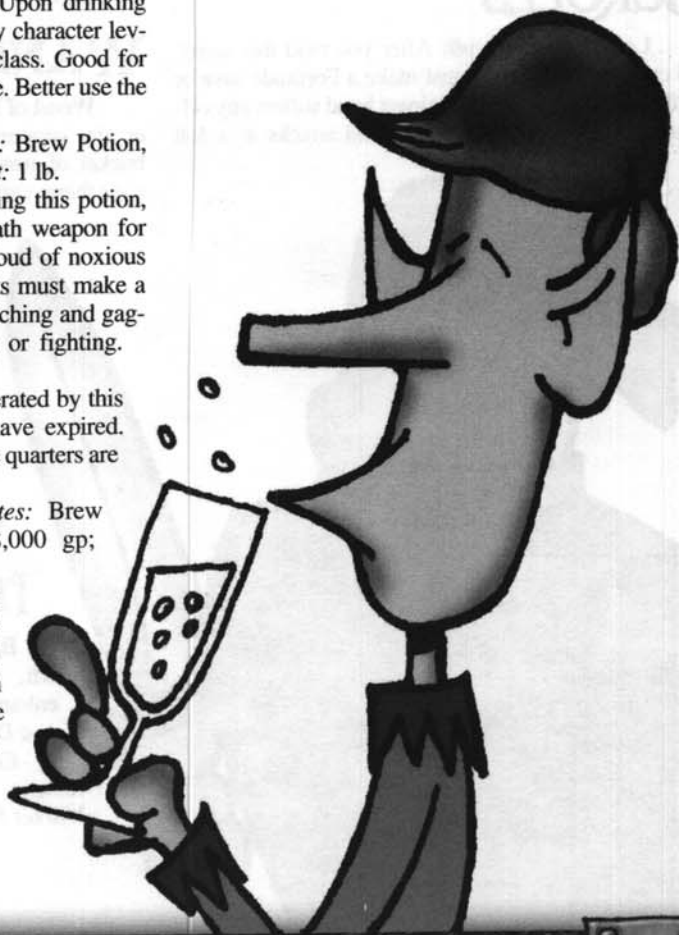
Yuppie Water: A fine, fabulous, fantastic drink. Yuppie water, when downed by an elf, grants a +6 enhancement bonus to all die rolls for 4d6 rounds. Any other race drinking yuppie water immediately spits it out. Ugh.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, *limited wish*; **Market Price:** 9,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

RINGS

Joy Buzzer: This is a gnome favorite. In fact, most joy buzzers are sized for gnome fingers, and do not resize to fit the fingers of larger races. (Halflings may wear them but rarely do, as it interferes with cooking.)

The joy buzzer delivers a 1d3 jolt of electricity on a successful touch attack, and may be used once per round. It has 50 charges and may be recharged. The insidious part of this little device is that a creature jolted by the joy buzzer, unless it makes a Will save at DC 15, enjoys the effect and willingly lets the gnome buzz him over and over.



Caster Level: 2nd; **Prerequisites:** Forge Ring, shocking grasp; **Market Price:** 1,500 gp; **Weight:** Rings don't have enough weight to matter.

The Other Ring: No, not *that* one, the *other* one. It doesn't actually have any powers whatsoever, but it looks cool. In fact, it looks just like *that* ring, so lots and lots of people will be coming after you to get it. Won't they be surprised when they take it off your severed finger!

Ahem.

Caster Level: 1st; **Prerequisites:** Forge Ring; **Market Price:** 10 gp; **Weight:** We told you before, rings don't weigh enough to matter.

RODS

Hot Rod: This rod has 25 charges and can cast the following magical effects:

Heat Metal: As the spell. This uses 1 charge.

Flame Blade: The rod transforms into the *blade* for the duration of the spell. This uses 1 charge.

Fire Storm: As the spell. This uses 2 charges.

Supercharger: This doubles the effect of any charge or bull rush action by an ally. You must touch the ally with the end of the *hot rod* while chanting the incantation "Shee Zreel Fie En My Foh Rone Ein." This uses no charges, but is a full-round action.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Rod, fire storm, flame blade, haste, heat metal; **Market Price:** 32,000 gp; **Weight:** 3 lbs.

SCROLLS

Left-Handed Scroll: After you read this scroll, all enemies in the area must make a Fortitude save or suffer the effects: Their dominant hand suffers any off-hand penalty, and their other hand attacks at a full

bonus (but only once per round). (Ambidextrous characters suffer off-hand penalties with *both* hands! Serves 'em right, the bloody munchkins.) Attempts to cast spells or write while under the effects of the *left-handed scroll* require a Concentration check to succeed (DC 30).

Market Price: 2,000 gp.

Rocky Scroll: This item combines the *fly* spell with a potent illusion: To all observers, you seem to have changed into a small rodent in an aviator helmet. Or it would if this scroll could be properly written, but experience has shown that this trick *never* works. It's something to pull out of your hat if you're desperate, however.

Market Price: 1,100 gp.

STAFFS

Staff, Infection: Ewww. This item has 50 charges, and the following effects:

Contagion: As the spell. Uses 1 charge.

Harm: As the spell. Uses 2 charges.

Horrid Wilting: As the spell. Uses 3 charges.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Staff, lots of spells; **Market Price:** 120,000 gp; **Weight:** 12 lbs.

Staff of Napalm: Charged (50). 20d6 damage to all within 50 feet of the targeted site; the caster may pick any location within long range (400 ft. + 40 ft./level).

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, fire storm; **Market Price:** 120,000 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

WANDS

Wand of Dowsing: Charged (50). When pointed at any creature and the command word uttered, a bucket of water appears from nowhere and upends over them, extinguishing torches and any other mundane fires; magical fire effects must make a save against DC 20 or also be extinguished.

It should be noted that this was originally an orcish item, and they are not known for their spelling...

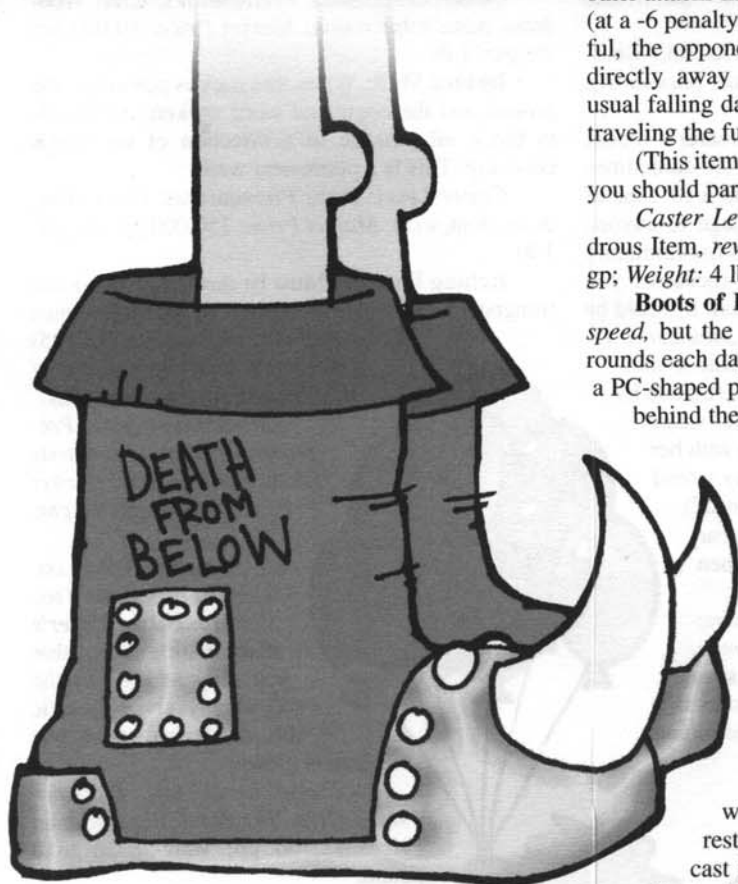
Caster Level: 20th **Prerequisites:** Craft Wand, create water; **Market Price:** 10,000 gp; **Weight:** whatever a wand weighs.

WONDROUS ITEMS

Bad-Ass Bandanna: As long as it is worn, give the user 1d6 hit points, +2 enhancement bonus to AC, +2d4 Strength and Dexterity bonus, and a +2 base attack.

Caster Level: 18th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, transformation; **Market Price:** 260,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.





Bag of Caltrops: This is actually a small canvas pouch. A hero may reach in and draw out 2d6 caltrops to scatter as a trap, to cover an ambush, or to convince halflings to put some shoes on already and stop stinking up the place. However, the user must make a successful Reflex save, DC 15, or accidentally poke himself with a caltrop, taking 1d4 points of damage. The *bag of caltrops* may be used four times a day.

Caster Level: 13th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *repel vermin*; **Market Price:** 20,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Big Fat Lyre: A bard may wield this as a club; it is +2 to attack and damage. In this mode, it is not all that fearsome.

However, a bard may also try to *play* it, in which case the feedback subjects all creatures within the area of effect to *wail of the banshee*, as if cast by a 20th-level wizard. The bard himself is immune to this effect; indeed, he thinks it's rather lovely.

Finally, a bard carrying this item may "take 11" in situations where normally he could "take 10." It's one more, you see.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *wail of the banshee*; **Market Price:** 360,000 gp; **Weight:** 6 lbs.

Boots of Butt-Kicking: These look like ordinary hiking boots, but their true power becomes evident in combat. A character may choose to forgo

other attacks in favor of a wicked kick, a called shot (at a -6 penalty) to the opponent's *tuchis*. If successful, the opponent is forcibly propelled 10d10 feet directly away from the butt-kicker, suffering the usual falling damage if he hits a solid object before traveling the full distance.

(This item is much more effective from the rear, you should pardon the expression.)

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *reverse gravity*; **Market Price:** 320,000 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

Boots of Running Really Fast: Like *boots of speed*, but the wearer may be *hasted* for up to 30 rounds each day. This item is not for the stealthy, as a PC-shaped puff of dust or smoke hangs in the air behind the fleeing hero for 1d4 rounds.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *haste*, *wish*; **Market Price:** 95,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Casting Couch: This potent item gives no benefit to spellcasters (other than providing a comfy place to rest their weary bones, of course). Non-spellcasters, however, get an extraordinary benefit from relaxing on the *casting couch*.

After two rounds, during which the hero may do nothing but rest, the *couch* grants him the ability to cast whatever spell last was cast or took effect within 30 feet of the *couch*. This spell will have *precisely* the same effects, although the target may be different. The person sitting on the *couch* may use the spell once per round, over and over, but begins to take damage after the first such casting – 1 hp the second time, 2 hp the third, 3 hp the fourth, and so on. This damage will not be apparent until the person gets up off the *couch*, so it's quite possible he could kill himself trying to heal his friends!

If more than one person sits on the *casting couch*, it obeys the last one to have been sitting for the required period of time. Someone who breaks bodily contact with the *couch*, for even a split second, must wait the full two rounds to start again. (It is, therefore, possible that *no one* could be in control of the *casting couch* if there's a struggle.)

The *couch* may only "hold" one spell at a time, so if another spell is cast nearby, it replaces the current spell in its "memory." This can be devastating if someone expects to whip out a *cure serious wounds* and ends up casting *meatier swarm* instead . . .

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 1,000,000 gp; **Weight:** 182 lbs..

Cloak of Obscurity: Like a *cloak of elvenkind*, but only gives a +5 circumstance bonus to Hide checks. On the other hand, its creator need not be an elf.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item; **Market Price:** 3,600 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Cute Shoulder Dragon: Aw, idn't the widdle thing just the *cutest*?!?

The *cute shoulder dragon* gives its, uh, "wearer" a +2 munchkin bonus to Charisma, because it's just that damn cute.

Additionally, it can sense its wearer's mood, and if the wearer feels threatened, or sometimes even just annoyed, the *dragon* can emit a 10' cone of fire which does 5d20 points of damage to anyone within the area of effect, no save, and fire immunity doesn't protect against the damage (because, you see, it's actually concentrated cuteness). It would be nice if this attack consumed the *cute shoulder dragon*, too, but it doesn't. It's too damn cute to die.

Cute shoulder dragons are indestructible by any known force. However, if the wearer should ever forget to take the dragon with her (oh, come on, what self-respecting guy would be caught dead with one of these things?), the *dragon* will leave in a huff, disappearing forever. It's *really* damn cute when it's angry.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *wish*, *summon monster VI*; **Market Price:** 274,252 gp 12 sp and 8 cp; **Weight:** none of your damn business.

Deck of Too Many Things: The minute a card is drawn from this deck, all of the magic items in this book immediately fall from the sky and crush everything within 20 feet of the person who drew the card. 10d6 damage. A Reflex save (DC 20) doesn't help, but at least you get to look acrobatic right before you're flattened.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 280,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Dice Bag of Holding. Contains all possible dice. Therefore, if you possess this item, you may borrow and use freely any die at the table (even – especially – any designated *masterwork die*), because you drew it out of your bag. It's sporting to give it back to its owner when you're done with it, but we aren't about to arbitrate dice disputes. We don't get paid enough for that headache.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 150,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Duck of Many Things: Can grant one *wish* per day, and usually won't even try to subvert your intent. But wait until you see the bill!

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 92,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Fake Beard: The wearer is immune to all scrying attempts. And he gains a +6 bonus on Disguise checks!

Caster Level: 16th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *false vision*; **Market Price:** 40,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Instant Wall: When this rock is placed on the ground and the command word spoken, it expands to block all passage in a direction of the user's choosing. This is a permanent wall.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 250,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Itching Powder: Must be thrown at the victim (ranged attack). On a successful hit the victim must succeed at a Fortitude check (DC 25) or there is a 25% chance he may take no actions for 1d6 rounds.

Caster Level: 13th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*; **Market Price:** 2,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Loaded Die: Like a *masterwork die* (see the *Munchkin Player's Handbook*), except that you may add +2 to the roll of any given specific die, designated when this item is gained.

Caster Level: 6th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item; **Market Price:** 12,500 gp; **Weight:** 20 to a pound.

Magic Lamp: Rub this lamp and make all your troubles go away.

There's a small oil reservoir in the bottom of the lamp, with an oil wick poking into the main body. You must fill the lamp with . . . oh, let's call them "aromatic herbs," and then light the wick.

Soon, the smoke from the herbs will cause everyone who fails a Will save (DC 25) to start pawing through their packs, looking for munchies. No combat can begin or continue while smoke continues to come from the *magic lamp*.

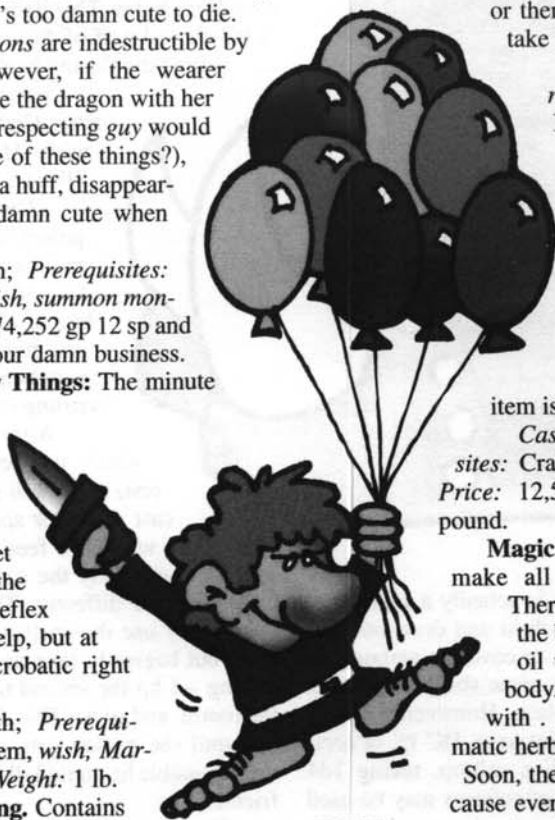
Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item; **Market Price:** 8,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

The Occasionally Reliable Amulet: Roll 1d6. On 1-4, this acts as an *amulet of protection*, giving a bonus to AC and all saving throws equal to the number rolled. On 5 or 6, it's no help whatsoever.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *shield*; **Market Price:** 26,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Pantyhose of Giant Strength: These sexy pantyhose give the wearer a +12 enhancement bonus to Strength and, just for giggles, a +4 to Charisma.

Caster Level: 14th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *bull's strength*; **Market Price:** 175,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.



Pointy Hat of Power: The wearer immediately gains 4 wizard levels when this hat is worn. These levels stack with any existing wizard levels. The levels are lost as soon as the hat is removed. He doesn't have any spells (or a spellbook, unless he already had one) . . . but he's a wizard!

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 400,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Sandals of Protection: These give a +10 enhancement bonus to AC. Just to make these even cooler, the bonus may be stacked with another enhancement bonus. Yes, this goes completely against the spirit of the rules, but you have to admit that everyone's going to be wearing a pair on the beach.

Caster Level: 100th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor; **Market Price:** 100,000 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

Scary False Teeth: Go ahead, try them on! All opponents in a 20-ft. radius, centered on the wearer of these teeth, suffer a -10 morale penalty on all die rolls. Command activated. Charged (50).

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 380,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Stepladder: Charged (50). User of this item gains a +6 bonus to all die rolls for as long as he stands on the *stepladder*. Each turn a character stands on the *stepladder* drains one charge. May only be used by Small or Tiny characters.

Caster Level: 20th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous item, *wish*; **Market Price:** 220,000 gp; **Weight:** 5 lbs.

ARTIFACTS

Blessed Mallet of St. Eeeeeuuuuuuuuuw: This weapon may only be wielded by a good-aligned character. Any other must succeed at a Will save (DC 20) or suffer 1d6 damage per round the weapon is held. The weapon delivers 5d8 damage to all evil-aligned characters and – what the hell – the same damage to anyone else. As long as it is held by a good-aligned character the mallet casts *cure light wounds* on that character once each round (whether he needs it or not).

Caster Level: 20th; **Weight:** 18 lbs.

Cheese Grater of Peace: The awe-inspiring *Cheese Grater of Peace* blasts its victims with a stunning 2d20 damage. This artifact has a +3 enhancement bonus to attack rolls.

Caster Level: 20th; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Helm of Peripheral Vision: Anyone wearing this helmet may not be flanked or backstabbed.

Caster Level: 12th; **Weight:** 6 lbs.

Pretty Balloons: Oooooo. Pretty. These balloons may never be destroyed. Once grasped, they immediately hypnotize 4d4 HD of creatures in a 50-ft. radius

centered on the balloons, as per the spell *hypnotism*. No save allowed. The pretty balloons also give the user the ability to fly as if cast by a 10th-level wizard.

Caster Level: 10th; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Sword of Slaying Everything Except Squid: Any target hit by the weapon (except those with tentacles) must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or die. If the save is successful the target suffers normal damage for a greatsword. When within 20 ft. of a squid (or other creature with tentacles) the wielder suffers a -6 morale penalty to all attack and save rolls.

Caster Level: 20th; **Weight:** 15 lbs.

Tinfoil Hat: The ancient and mysterious tinfoil hat is a most powerful artifact. This artifact grants the wearer a +10 spell resistance bonus, immunity to all spells of second level or lower, and a -6 circumstance penalty to Charisma – because dude, you look stupid!

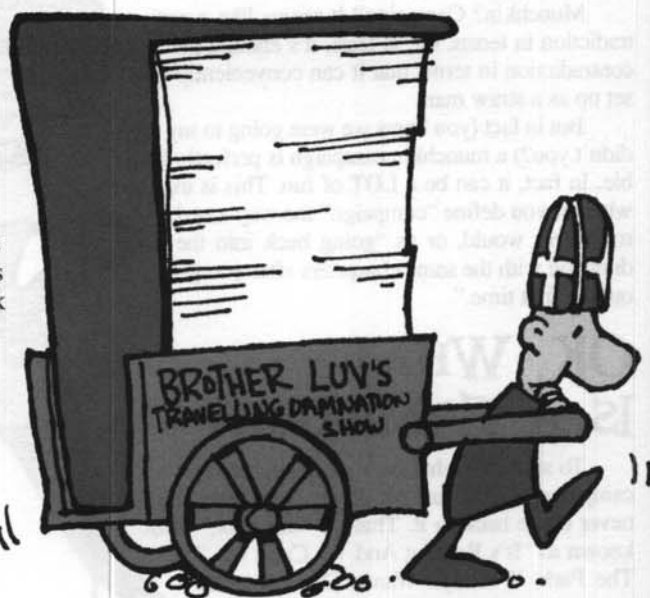
Caster Level: 20th; **Weight:** 1 lbs.

Unnatural Axe: This giant, sentient axe with teeth and eyes bites its target. The weapon is a +8 greataxe. It likes to kill monsters and will, twice per day, cast *summon monster V*. It will usually cast this spell at the worst possible moment.

Caster Level: 20th; **Weight:** 20 lbs.

Very Holy Book: A massive (incredibly massive) tome of holy knowledge. Reading the book takes 1 year. At the end of this time, the reader must make an Intelligence check (DC 20). On a successful check, the reader gains 5 cleric levels, even if he had no levels in the class before. Only one person may read the book at a time. Reading time can be cut down to one day if the DM is given a C note – holy is holy, but it's all about the Benjamins . . .

Caster Level: 20th; **Weight:** 120 lbs.



CHAPTER THREE

THE MUNCHKIN CAMPAIGN

WARNING: This chapter contains serious discussion and actually uses the word "roleplaying" without sarcasm. Sensitive readers may wish to skip to the next chapter, where we get back to the snide humor, random mockery, and overpowered rules bits for which you bought this book.

All words in this chapter containing an even number of letters are Open Content. The remainder are Closed Content. Numbers expressed as figures are Closed Content, but punctuation marks are Open Content, except for apostrophes, which count as letters. You will be tested on this.

Munchkin? Campaign? It seems like a contradiction in terms. Or, at least, it's enough like a contradiction in terms that it can conveniently be set up as a straw man.

But in fact (you knew we were going to say this, didn't you?) a munchkin campaign is perfectly feasible. In fact, it can be a LOT of fun. This is true whether you define "campaign" the way a real roleplayer would, or as "going back into the dungeon with the same characters after you get out the first time."

OK, WHAT IS A CAMPAIGN?

To start off, what *isn't* a campaign? It isn't a campaign if you just sit down once, play, and never come back to it. That's a "one-shot," also known as "It's Raining And We Can't Go To The Park, Whaddya Wanna Do, I Dunno,

Whadda YOU Wanna Do, I Dunno, Let's Kill Us Some Orcs."

A CAMPAIGN HAS MULTIPLE SESSIONS

It meets more than once, and it has (more or less) the same players each time, and (usually) the same GM.

On the other hand, if you roll up new characters every time you get together, it's still just a bunch of one-shots. Which can still be fun, but if you want a campaign . . .

A CAMPAIGN IS CONSISTENT

In a campaign, you have the same characters every time you play – or, at least, those who survived the last session. You're telling a continued story, which picks up each time where it left off before. Maps remain valid from one outing to the next.

Of course, this can be overdone. If the characters go back to the same place and find all the same monsters, with all the same treasure, behind the same doors where they were the first time . . . beg pardon? That IS your campaign, you say?

Okay. Here's a **Campaign Hint** for you. Sure, you can save money by using the same module over and over . . . but, in the name of all that's holy, at least re-roll the encounters!

At any rate, a campaign has *some* level of consistency. It will keep the same general style (see below). There will be continuing NPCs, unless the players slaughter everyone they meet on the very first encounter. The game world is a consistent place, with consistent rules – the players know what to expect.

A CAMPAIGN IS CARBONATED

Unlike "still wines," which do not have bubbles, a campaign . . . no, wait. That's a *champagne*. Never mind.



CAMPAIGN STYLES: THE FULL MONTY

Munchkin roleplaying falls into a number of different campaign styles, all of which, for some reason, are named Monty. These include Monty Hall, Monty Haul, Monty Python, Monte Carlo, Monte Cargo, and Monte Cristo. Stripped to their essentials, these styles bare little resemblance to serious roleplaying. We wish no affrontal, much less *full* affrontal, to other roleplayers, but the naked truth is: munchkins *like* to play like this. We have nothing to hide, including our hides. So let us open new doors and reveal all . . . the Full Monty of Munchkinism.

MONTY HALL

Named after the famous game-show host, the classic Monty Hall campaign is typically a dungeon adventure. Which door will you pick? There's no rhyme or reason to what's behind them, but you know it will include a lot of good loot . . . and the occasional goat.

A Monty Hall campaign is easy to create and – all joking aside – can be a lot of fun in a brain-dead way. All the players have to do is kill the monster, grab the treasure, and level up. Whether the serious roleplayers admit it or not, this is the root of the hobby. This is how it all started, and there are worse things to do on a slow Sunday than get back to our roots.

MONTY HAUL

The Monty Haul campaign is one in which the distinction between the DM and players is somewhat vague. It's like Monty Hall, but with the "Loot" setting turned all the way up. A Monty Haul DM is *on the player's side*. Totally. He makes sure they have a constant flow of newer and bigger treasures . . . guarded by monsters who put up a good fight but never pose any real harm to the party. They may get hurt, but there will always be healing potions in the chest, and if worst comes to worst, the little old Priest of the God of Life will show up with his *raise dead* spell and tell you to be more careful next time.

Now, even the most munchkinly adult will, sooner rather than later, get bored with a complete Monty Haul campaign. But if you're introducing very young kids to roleplaying, this is the way to do it. You want to entertain them, you want to give them goodies, and you absolutely don't want to kill their characters. In that context, there is nothing wrong with playing

Now, even the most munchkinly adult will, sooner rather than later, get bored with a complete Monty Haul campaign. But if you're introducing very young kids to roleplaying, this is the way to do it.

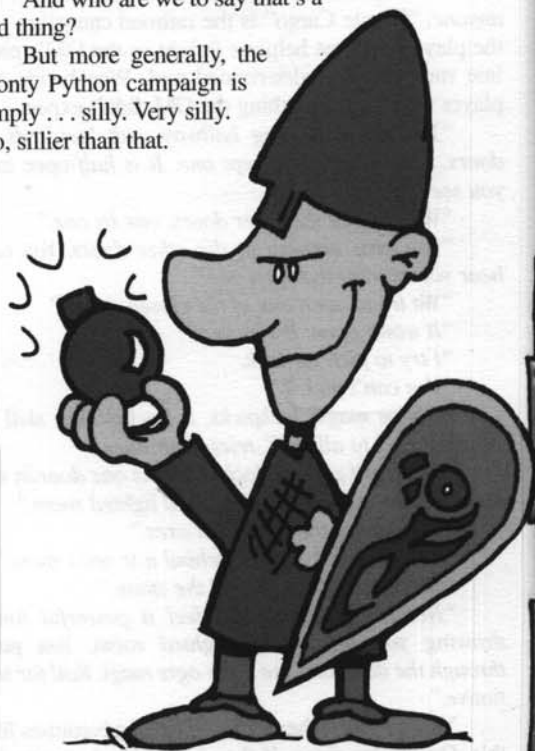
Monty Haul for them. Just make sure you give them a chance to grow out of it before they decide you don't know any other way to play . . .

MONTY PYTHON

The Monty Python campaign is, of course, a tip of the hat to the Dead Parrot boys. Some GMs run a *literal* Python campaign . . . the Black Knight blocks the bridge and will still be rude after all his limbs are removed, the Vorpal Bunny can take your head off with one snap, and the ladies of Castle Anthrax are always delighted to see visitors.

And who are we to say that's a bad thing?

But more generally, the Monty Python campaign is simply . . . silly. Very silly. No, sillier than that.



This sort of game works best when all the players are equally silly, and have no expectation at all of logic or fairness. If the DM deems it amusing to turn one of the players into a bucket of fried chicken, or Ronald Reagan, or (to return to the Python canon) a newt, the players should be able to go along with it happily. After all, they'll get better.

MONTE CARLO

The Monte Carlo campaign is the exact opposite of Monty Haul. The DM is not helping the players . . . he's opposing them directly. It's a high-stakes battle of wits. The characters are gambling their lives, and the DM is running the casino. The house has an edge.

But a perfect Monte Carlo campaign is *almost* fair. If the DM is playing against the players, scoring his own mental points for killing PCs, he should be consistent. There should be clues to every deathtrap. Every monster should have a vulnerability, every poison should have an antidote. The players *can* survive, if they are clever and careful enough. Teamwork will help . . . a lot.

Likewise, the Monte Carlo DM plays *exactly* by the rules of the game. He's not free to fudge die rolls or make "interpretations" in his own favor. If the players can catch him out, he can't change the rules and kill them anyway – he has to go along with them.

This is definitely a powergamer's campaign. Perhaps even a wargamer's campaign. If you like rules-lawyering . . . if you like it so much that you are happy when other people do it . . . this might be for you. But don't be surprised when some people scream and run.

MONTE CARGO

Alone among the styles described here, this is the one that Your Gentle Authors do *not* recommend for anyone. "Monte Cargo" is the railroad campaign . . . the players are just helpless freight as the DM's plot-line runs to its predetermined end. Woe betide the player who tries something the GM didn't expect . . .

"You are in a long hallway with hundreds of doors. All are closed except one. It is half-open and you see a light."

"We listen at the other doors, one by one."

"You hear nothing at the other doors. You can hear voices from the open one."

"We try to open one of the closed doors."

"It won't open. It's locked."

"I try to pick the lock."

"You can't pick it."

"I have magic lockpicks, a Lockpicking skill of 20, and a +5 to all DEX-related abilities."

"You can't pick the lock. There is one door in the hallway that is open; behind it is a lighted room."

"We chop at the door with axes."

"The door falls apart. Behind it is solid stone."

"We back off and fireball the stone."

"Nothing happens. You feel a powerful force drawing you toward the lighted room. You pass through the door, and see three ogre magi. Roll for initiative."

Yes, we know there are published adventures like this. Don't play them. If there's nothing better to do, go to the park in the rain and catch pneumonia. You'll thank us in the long run.

MONTE CRISTO

This is the campaign style in which the PCs are dipped in egg batter, fried, and served with raspberry jam. Um, wait, no, that's not it . . .

This is the domain of the "Killer DM." Unlike the Monte Carlo DM, who is actively trying to off the PCs but plays fair about it, the Killer DM slays characters arbitrarily and for fun. Well, *his* fun, anyway.

This doesn't sound like a good time. Often it's not. On the other hand, easy death can be accompanied by easy resurrection (see box, p. 29), making this an arbitrary and silly campaign in which you die a lot, often in amusingly messy ways.

The Monte Cristo DM is the one who will have the best traps . . . the ones that were too unfair for his Monte Carlo brother and too gross for the friendlier sort of DM. Being a cold-blooded killer, he's not shackled by any idea that there has to be a way out.

Which, and this is important, makes it all the more fun if you *find* a way out!

In a perverse way, playing with a Killer DM can be a lot of fun. Just erase the name on the old character sheet, write in a new one, and jump back in . . .

MONTE COOK

Ten by ten foot room. Orc. Tasty pie. Buy the shirt (www.montecook.com). Maybe there are more pies around here somewhere . . .

CAMPAIGN ISSUES

One hallmark of a real "campaign," even the lightest-hearted, is that the same players will be back week after week. That means that there has to be some agreement, or at least understanding, on a few basic issues, such as the maximum length of time since everyone's last shower, who is going to bring the munchies, and whether the soundtrack will be Mozart or DJ Whack-em-all.

And you know what? We're not touching any of those issues with the 11-foot pole. Those are *your* problem. Can you say "your problem" with us? Gooood!

Monster Power

The reader will have noted that nowhere in the above descriptions do we discuss the actual power of the monsters. Surely Challenge Ratings make a difference to the campaign type?

Well, yes and no! They make a difference, but only relative to the power of the PCs. That Humongous Plutonium Dragon may be able to wipe up the whole party . . . or it, and its mate and its whole brood, may be mere sword-fodder. Populate your dungeons with whatever creatures amuse you. What matters is the way they relate to the PCs' abilities.

In a typical munchkin campaign, of course, the creatures that could demolish the party in January will be helpless punching-bags before mid-March, and not worth bothering with by April Fool's Day. This is what munchkins call "character development."



But there are a few things that we *can* discuss in a way that might help us both. You get some guidelines for things to discuss with your players, if not at the very beginning of play, fairly soon afterward (like, about the time they say "Cool, can we do this again?"). We get something to fill up what would otherwise be unsightly blank pages.

MURDER MOST FUN

If you're not killing stuff . . . lots of stuff . . . and taking the stuff that belonged to the dead stuff, then you're not playing *Munchkin*. But what can you kill, and what should you let off with a stiff beating or a nasty glare? Discuss this first, so your players (note that we said *players* here, and not *characters*) won't be at each other's throats. Or, much worse, at yours.

PCS KILLING PCS

This is the big one. In most roleplaying games, it's just Not Done. The player characters aren't expected to get along all the time, but it's basic to the genre that they won't actually try to off each other. Even in those campaigns in which PC-on-PC slaying is acceptable, it's generally understood that there should be a long period of well-roleplayed antipathy first, followed by a fair fight, quite possibly with all the formalities of the code duello.

In munchkin-type roleplaying, on the other hand, the line "As soon as she turns her back, I run her through with my spear" may not seem out of place. After all, what are the other PCs, really, except more targets? Targets who have lots of cool Stuff, at that?

Okay. It sounds logical, but we recommend that you not do it. You'll notice that the original *Munchkin* game is set up so players can screw each other over, even literally stab each other in the back . . . but they can't actually fight. There's a reason for this; a base level of PC cooperation is fundamental to the genre. Granted, it doesn't make much sense that the sort of thugs you're depicting would really be able to trust each other. On the other hand, we've already agreed to believe in 10' x 10' rooms containing chests guarded by orcs . . .

The suggested agreement, then, is "We won't kill each other, or even maim each other very much, without lots and lots of warning." If you want to try it the other way, we advise you to create new characters first, and to put even less effort than usual into naming them.

PCS KILLING NPCs

Granted, the very essence of a munchkin game, and practically any other roleplaying game, is for the DM to create monsters and cannon-fodder, and for the player characters to kill them. We heartily endorse this concept for several reasons, including:

- ◆ Without it, you would have no campaign.
- ◆ Without it, we would have no book.
- ◆ Without it, in fact, none of us would have careers.
- ◆ We personally dig it.

Refresher Course

Here is what your players expect from the game. Any deviation from this should be carefully planned, as it may confuse or upset them.*

Kill the monsters.

Total the experience points.

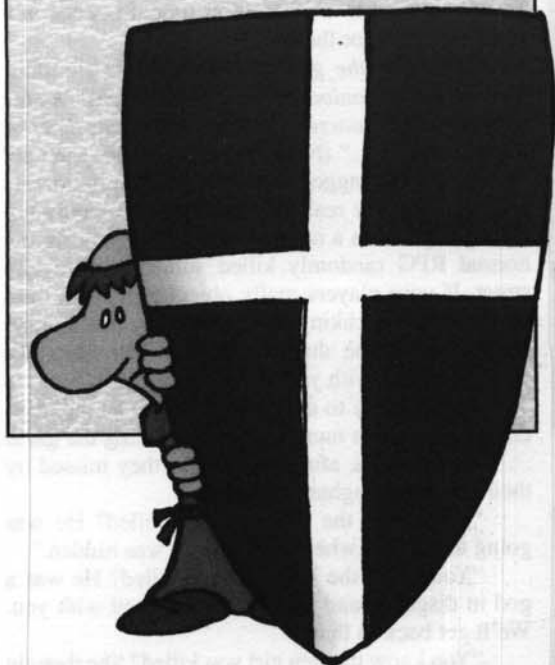
Loot the bodies.

Search the room.

Total the new experience points from the stuff they found.

Look for more monsters, and repeat until the munchies run out.

* Of course, if you *intend* to confuse and upset them, we're right there in your corner.



Nevertheless . . . it can be overdone. If the players are going to kill *everything that moves*, the DM will need to structure his encounters accordingly. This is, granted, a lot easier. But many DMs, and many players, really enjoy *SOME* roleplaying in between the muggings and slaughter.

And that means that you should come to some sort of understanding about random murders. Some players will be able to tell what sort of NPCs are appropriate to slay, and when they slay inappropriately it will be for fun. Others will have no clue that they are *supposed* to do anything to NPCs except kill them. You will probably want to educate that latter sort. People who munchkin knowingly and for grins can be great fun. People who don't know any better, really and truly, probably didn't buy this book, and wouldn't laugh if they read it, and if you can't get away from them you should try to reform them.

One means of reform is the standard roleplaying technique of "consequences." And you don't have to figure out an advance consequence for every outrageous act: feel free to wing it.

"You strike at the old man. Your sword bounces off! He raises his staff, and it begins to glow . . ." (In this case, you have just turned what you meant as an information encounter into a straight combat. The players will get to kill something, which is what they wanted, but they'll know they have been in a fight. This is an example of reacting in a way that entertains the players. You may not always want to do that!)

"You strike down the child. As you watch, a mist gathers over his body. A hollow voice declares 'Thee lacketh all charity, thee dirty bastards. Now suffereth the wrath mosteth foul of Feemish the Omnipotent!' You look down and find that your weapons and armor are all gone. Plus, you have all turned into halflings. Bald halflings." (This is an example of arbitrarily making the players suffer. You don't want to do that every time, but once in a while it's good for them.)

"You stab the girl. She screams as she dies. Around you, the onlookers echo her screams. Not far off, you hear a hoarse voice call 'What was that?' A whistle blows . . ." (Now they have to flee the City Watch, or get dragged in as the random murderers they are. A fairly realistic outcome; this would not be out of place in a normal RPG, if the players in a normal RPG randomly killed someone on a city street. If your players really object to realistic outcomes in a munchkin game, you may just have to keep them in the dungeon where their bloodlust won't interfere with your sense of fitness.)

Another way to deal with this is to let the players get away with murder, literally, during the game . . . but tell them, afterwards, what they missed by their random slaughter.

"You know the old man you killed? He was going to tell you where the treasure was hidden."

"You know the little kid you killed? He was a god in disguise, and now he's displeased with you. We'll get back to that."

"You know the rich girl you killed? She thought Sir Bob was really cute. Too bad you stabbed her, huh?"

Note that none of this has to be *true*. The important thing is that the players believe it and take it out on Sir Bob.

NPCs KILLING PCs

And last, we come to the question of PC death at your hands. There are a number of ways for the DM to kill off player characters. Some of this gets back to campaign style, as discussed above . . . a "Monty Haul" GM will, by definition, not kill off PCs, while a "Monte Cristo" GM may very well off a couple between game sessions just to set the mood.

Other GMs can find the sort of PC-slaying style that agrees with them and their players . . .

◆ **Completely arbitrary.** "You say you pick up a rock to toss down the well? Make your saving roll! Oh, too bad. Rock of Doom. Roll up a new character."

Three Encounters That Are More Fun to Read Than to DM For, At Least After the First Few Times

Old Man: Verily, strangers, what seek ye here in the Forest of Doom?

Sir Bob: I dunno, what have you got? (Sir Bob whips out his shortsword and lops the old man's head off.)

Old Man: Arghhhhhhh . . .

Sir Bob: What do I find on the body?

DM: . . . Ten gold pieces and a staff.

Fred the Wizard: Dibs the staff. It's no good to you, you're a fighter.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
Big-Eyed Waif: Sir, can you spare a crust of bread?

Sir Bob: Sure, just a second!

(Sir Bob whips out his shortsword and guts the waif with one stroke.)

Big-Eyed Waif: Eihhhhhh! Momm . . .

Sir Bob: What do I find on the body?

DM: . . . Dirty rags.

Fred the Wizard: Hmm. I cast *detect magic* on the rags.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
Lovely Young Woman: Please, I'm looking for help. I can pay.

Sir Bob: Cool, this one's got money.

(Sir Bob whips out his shortsword and stabs her through the heart.)

Lovely Young Woman: Ohhhhhhhh . . .

Sir Bob: What do I find on the body?

DM: . . . An expensive robe, which now has a hole in it and blood all over it, a purse with 500 gp, and another 100 gp worth of jewelry.

Sir Bob: Now that's more like it.

Fred the Wizard: Jewelry! Cool. Any . . . rings there?



◆ **Bloodthirsty but logical.** "You investigate the chest. You don't detect any traps . . . You open it. Make your saving throw! Oh, too bad. Poison needed. Save vs. poison. Oh, well. Don't feel bad, those rolls were all at -10. Roll up a new character."

◆ **Merely relentless.** "Well, you know, there were 4,328 orcs, and only four of you, and you only had 32 major magic items left between you, and you were down on hits after those dragons. And the last 300 of them *did* try to surrender, and you said no. Roll up new characters."

The more often and arbitrarily you slay the PCs, the more generous you may wish to be in permitting them to return. See the box.

ENDING CONDITIONS

What is the purpose of a campaign? That depends. To serious roleplayers engaged in Serious Roleplaying, the campaign *is* its own purpose. It's an opportunity to roleplay, to explore character mindsets, to stretch the whole form of the art. Such campaigns can last indefinitely.

But that's not the kind of campaign we are playing here. We are **RULE**playing, exploring the "kill them and take their stuff" mindset, and stretching the patience of the GM and the intent of the designers. And bluntly speaking . . . this stuff can get old after a while.

So don't let that happen. Don't give yourself and your players a chance to get bored. Remember that munchkinism is all about *keeping score*, and the reason

to keep score is to tell who **WINS**. That goes for individual encounters, and it can go for the whole game, too. You may want to set up your campaign, from the beginning, with a clearly defined goal. When that goal is met, the characters will all have "won" and will be retired.

COOPERATIVE ENDINGS

In a cooperative ending, there is a specific goal to be met, and all the players (and whoever their characters are at the moment) will win when that goal is met. The players should all know what the goal is. Whether their characters know the goal is debatable . . . but in a munchkin game, the line between player knowledge and character knowledge is tenuous, so don't worry about it.

Possible goals include:

◆ **Slay the Mighty Dragon.** The dragon should be mighty enough that characters will need high levels and gobs of magic items. The campaign is about collecting all that Stuff; in the climax, they confront the dragon in its lair and whack it mercilessly. They then take all its gold and live happily ever after. The End.

◆ **Explore the Whole Fricking Dungeon.** It's a big dungeon, and there are a lot of nasty things in it, especially (of course) lower down. As part of the whole "keeping score" thing, the levels should be designed so the players will *know* when a given one has been completely mapped. Think "video game," with each level being a nice clean square, all walls the same thickness, and so on.

◆ **Restore the Magic Thingie.** The PCs live in the fair city of Point A. It is threatened by . . . well, something . . . which can only be defeated by the application of a Magic Thingie which is currently located at Point B. They have to get it and bring it back. The GM can reward them by permitting them to wield the Thingie in a climactic battle.

COMPETITIVE ENDINGS

A competitive ending requires a bit more management, because, well, when the campaign ends, one of the players will win and the rest will lose. This can lead to a high PC death rate. But some groups will enjoy that.

◆ **The Quest For Level 10.** It worked in the *Munchkin* card game, and by all that's holy in your campaign world of choice, it will work here. The first player to get a PC to 10th level wins. Clean, simple, arbitrary, munchkinny.

◆ **The Gnomes, Elves, and Orcs of Zurich.** Decide in advance how many sessions you'll play. At the end of the last session, everybody cashes in their magic items and other loot, and the one with the biggest pile of gold is named Queen of the Fairies. Or whatever.

◆ **Body Count.** Quintessential munchkinism. Again, decide in advance how many sessions you'll play. This time, though, keep separate track of how much experience each player gains specifically by killing things. Nothing else matters. High score wins.

I'll Be Back!

The more freely the DM slays player characters, the easier it should be to get them back. Within reason. Or perhaps not within reason. Some possibilities:

◆ **Easily accessible resurrection magic.** Lots of rings of resurrection, with lots of charges.

◆ **Fewer penalties for resurrection.** It's up to the DM just how painless it should be.

◆ **Cheap revival.** There's a Little Old Priest around every corner just itching to practice his *raise dead* spell, or there's a friendly deity who doesn't require much in the way of a sacrifice. (Installment plan resurrection?)

◆ **Easy reincarnation.** Nobody stays dead, but the DM decides what they come back as. (Hee, hee.)

◆ **The video game theory.** Everybody has a given number of lives, automatically, and at high levels, you get more.

◆ **Utter munchkinism.** Nobody stays dead. No matter how bad the wounds, you recover after first aid. If nobody is left to give first aid, then the whole party wakes up after the monsters wander off, groggy and stripped of some of their goodies but with full hp restored.

Remember that munchkining is all about keeping score, and the reason to keep score is to tell who WINS.

YOU AND THE RULES

As a DM, there's one important decision you have to make, very early on. You can discuss it with the players if you like, but it's *your* decision. That is:

Are they going to be allowed to rules-lawyer you?

If your campaign style is Monte Carlo, that's automatically a yes . . . let the battle of wits begin! If it's anything else, though, you have to decide who is in charge: you, or the rules?

THE RULES ARE IN CHARGE

As the DM, you are strictly Lawful, and the rule-book (whichever one you happen to be using) is the Law. You will follow it without deviation. If there's a typo, the typo is the Law. If you make a ruling and the players can show that it doesn't agree with the Law, you will change your ruling and thank them. On the other hand, if the PCs are all about to die, and they think of a clever and amusing way out, and it would work if not for one little rule . . . you point out the rule problem and let them die.

You munchkin, you.

YOU ARE IN CHARGE

As the DM, you are strictly Lawful, and your whims at any given moment are the Law. Or does that make you strictly Chaotic? The answer is whatever *you* say it is.

Your game is built around the framework of the rules, but you have added house rules and interpretations, and you feel free to change them at any time. If the players point out that you have always done something just the opposite, you don't feel a need to defend yourself or even explain. You are the DM. You are God.

You munchkin, you.

A REASONABLE COMPROMISE

Or you could compromise. In general, you play by the rules, but you retain the right to create special cases when you feel that best serves the flavor of the game. Hmm . . . that's almost too reasonable to go into this book. But you can do it if you want to. You're in charge. And oddly enough, this non-munchkinly attitude can lead to great player fun and some very munchkinly games.

So you can still be a munchkin if you want to!

Quid in Nomine Est?

As the DM, one way you can help your players fit into the campaign is to guide them toward appropriate character names. There are a number of different ways to pick names, of course. As interpreted for a *Munchkin* game, these would include:

PLAYER

Bob
Bob's Character
Bob's Other Character
Bob II
Bob III
Bob XIII

RACE

Bob the Dwarf
Dwarf Bob
Bob's Dwarf

CLASS

Bob's Wizard
Bob's Fighter
Bob's Thief
Bob's New Thief

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CHARACTERS

Bob's Horse
Bob's New Thief's Hireling
Bob's New Thief's New Hireling

GREAT LITERARY INSPIRATIONS

Fladnag
Odorf
Redav Htradr
Dooch Nibor
Krik Niatpac
Namtab
Nanoc
Bob Conan

DISTINGUISHING

CHARACTERISTICS

Bob the Mighty
Bob the Wise
Bob the Double-Classed
The Guy With the +3 Sword

HABITS OR CUSTOMS

Ear-Collector Guy
Fireball Guy
Berserk Guy

CHARACTER HISTORY

Bob's Guy Who Set Himself on Fire
Bob's Guy Who Always Runs
Mister Feat Forgetter
Bob the Chickenslayer

And, of course, experienced roleplayers will combine these, for unforgettable, evocative names like "Bob's Double-Classed Dwarf VI."

Player Rewards or Ring That Bell, Dr. Pavlov

Why are your players playing? If it's a munchkin game, there's one answer: *In-game rewards*. They want to level up, to increase their characters' power, to get Stuff.

You, as the dispenser of Stuff, are like unto a god to them . . . as long as you keep control. The experienced GM will use rewards to control player behavior. Yes, character behavior too . . . but *player* behavior. Reward them for cooperating with the chosen game style; reward them for being as munchkinly as you want them to be, and no more.

The Top Ten In-Game Rewards

Remember: if a munchkin character is just a collection of numbers, there are lots of lovely ways to make the player happy, and they all boil down to "Make a number bigger."

And here are the top 10 numbers you can make bigger to get that Pavlovian response from your players and keep them coming back . . .

10. Skill bonuses.
9. Bonuses to saving rolls.
8. New feats, especially feats they could not normally qualify for.
7. Bonuses to existing magic items – extra pluses, extra charges, extra powers.
6. Magic items.
5. Triple XP for this adventure!
4. Gold pieces.
3. Stat bonuses.
2. Raw experience points.
- And, of course, the munchkin's favorite reward, the very best treat in the whole doggie bag:
1. Levels!!!

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Many new DMs have a tough time wrapping their head around the idea of gaming with a bunch of munchkins. Or, to be more precise, they know perfectly well what gaming with munchkins is like; they just don't know how to structure a game so that both the players and the DM have fun at the same time.

The key to successfully gaming with munchkins is simply to give them their lead and let them play it out. When they get tired of this game – if they ever do – you can then reel them back in to whatever plot you had in mind before munchkins got hold of your storyboards, and begin the cycle again.

Here follows an example of how this works in practice. The DM, whom we shall call "DM," has had a rough week of tech support for eDolts.com (not, as of this writing, a real company)

and is looking forward to a nice, intellectual roleplaying game with his friends. His friends, who are indistinguishable munchkins whom we shall collectively call "Bruce" (insert two-minute Monty Python digression here), are looking to kill things, take their loot, and generally wreak havoc, logic be damned. It is far easier for Mohammed to go to the munchkins, so DM will have to adapt. Let's listen in:

DM: You come to a heavy oaken door, swollen into its frame –

Bruce: I smash it. What's behind it?

DM: – swollen into its frame, which is etched with runes depicting –

Bruce: Hey, are you listening? I said I smash it! What's behind the door?

DM: [Sighs.] You take [clattering dice] 12 points of damage from the electricity arcing through the runes in the frame.

Bruce: No way! Not fair! You never said the door was trapped!

DM: Well, I started to, but you weren't –

Bruce: You got gypped, dude.

Bruce: Hey, Bruce, don't you have that *ring of protection from electricity*?

Bruce: Naw, I sold that a couple of months ago to buy a new sword. See?

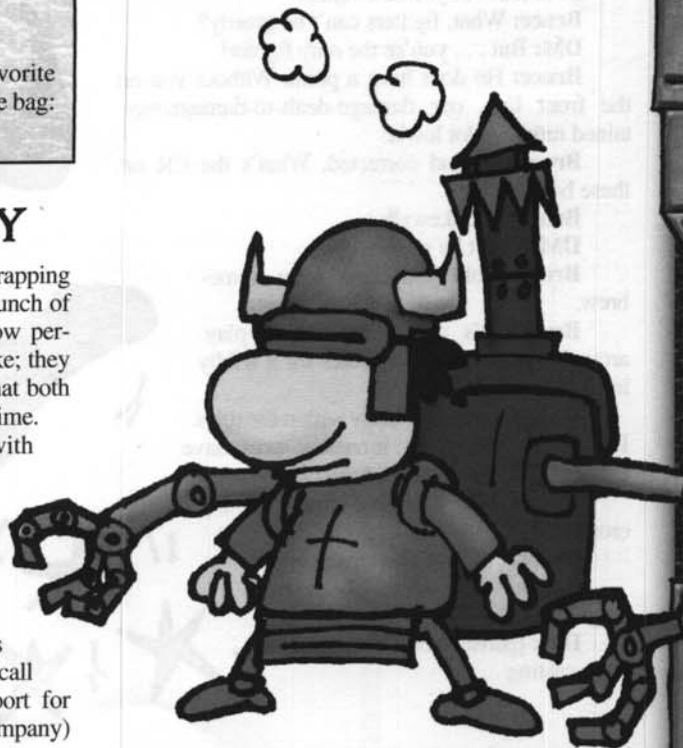
Bruces: Wow . . .

DM: [perhaps a bit loudly] Once the electricity subsides, you are able to open the door easily. In the room beyond, alerted to your approach by the loud ZZZZT of Bruce, there stand three humanoid figures about –

Bruce: What are they?

DM: What?

Bruce: What are they?



DM: I haven't finished describing them yet, so how would you know?

Bruce: No, Bruce has a point. It would be a lot faster if you could just tell us what they are. Then we'll know what they look like, how tough they are, and whether we can take them now or pull back to the corridor and cast a couple of defensive spells.

DM: [mouth agape]

Bruce: He doesn't want to tell us. I sure hope these aren't more of his lame-ass homebrew monsters.

Bruce: Probably are. You know how he likes to screw with the books.

Bruce: Yeah, no kidding. Is it our fault that we've memorized all the monsters' abilities?

Bruce: And stats.

Bruce: Well, naturally the stats.

DM: Uh, so, anyway, the humanoids –

Bruce: You still haven't told us what they are.

DM: – stand about eight feet tall –

Bruce: Ogres, most likely. He does like his ogres, doesn't he?

DM: – with blue skin –

Bruce: Ogre magi? But this is a Western game! Not fair!

Bruce: They could have been summoned.

Bruce: Good point. I retract my comment.

DM: – BLUE SKIN, and one of them seems to be chanting in a –

Bruce: [simultaneously] HE'S CASTING!

Bruce: I waste 'im with my crossbow!

Bruce: I throw my daggers!

Bruce: I search for secret doors!

DM: [Sighs.] Secret doors???

Bruce: Yeah, these guys can handle this fight without me. If I can get a jump on the treasure chamber, I can pocket the best loot and they'll never know.

DM: But . . . you're a fighter!

Bruce: What, fighters can't be greedy?

DM: But . . . you're the *only* fighter!

Bruce: He does have a point. Without you on the front line, our damage-dealt-to-damage-sustained ratio is a lot lower.

Bruce: I stand corrected. What's the CR on these bad boys?

Bruce: 8. Cakewalk.

DM: Don't be so sure . . .

Bruce: Told you these were homebrew.

Bruce: It's really not fair to play around with the rules. It makes for a wildly inconsistent game.

DM: No, this is entirely within the rules. Remember that some monsters may have classes. And one of them is still casting a spell.

Bruce: No, I wasted 'im with my crossbow!

Bruce: And I tossed my daggers!

Bruce: And what about my magic missiles?

DM: [pause] You never said you were casting . . .

Bruce: Standard procedure when we encounter resistance with arcane abilities. Says so on my character sheet.

DM: What? Let me see that!

Bruce: Uh . . . [shuffle shuffle] . . . must be on one of the pages I left on the bus last week. I'll make a new printout before the next session.

DM: Riiiiiiight. Fine. Your *magic missiles* go off and hit some sort of magical barrier. They dissipate. No damage.

Bruce: Look. Clearly these guys are CR 9 or even 10. We can take 'em, no sweat. Why even bother running the battle? They should know they're out-classed and surrender from the outset.

Bruce: Especially after their main spell-slinger took [rolling dice] 14 points of damage from the three crossbow bolts embedded in his belly.

Bruce: And 6 from my dagger.

Bruce: Only 6? You wussy.

DM: We don't even know if you hit yet!

Bruce: Sure we do. I told you earlier, I hit AC 25.

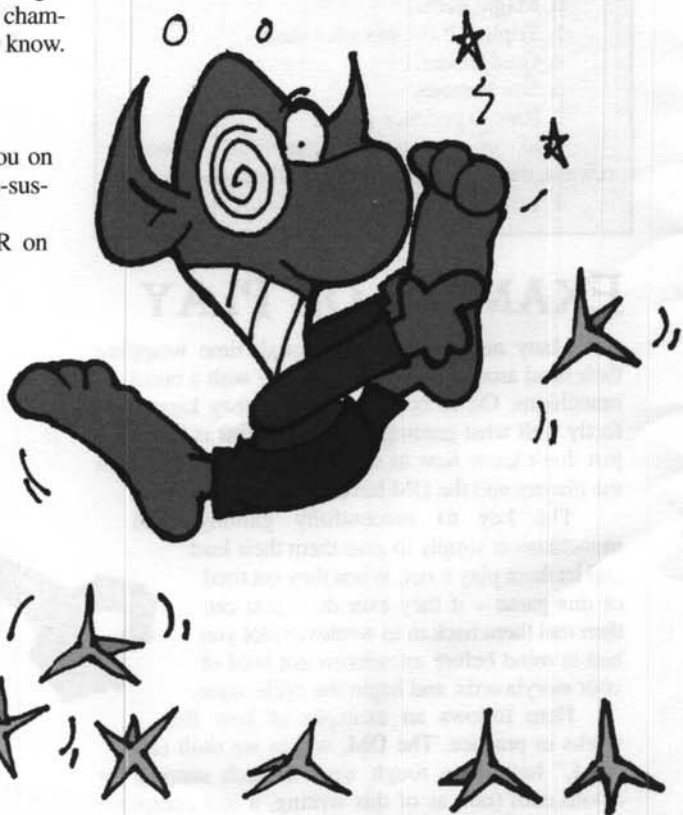
Bruce: Yeah, me too.

DM: *No you didn't!* [takes a deep breath] Look, let's just start over. You open the door and –

Bruce: He always does this when things don't go his way. "Let's just start over," he says, now that he knows what we're going to do.

DM: *But you haven't done anything yet!!!*

Bruce: Christ, there's no need to shout. We were *trying* to do things, you just wouldn't let us.



Bruce: Sorry I'm late; the "shop & rob" down the street was out of nacho cheezy-bits, so I had to run downtown. What's going on?

Bruce: [hooks his thumb at DM] He just hit the reset button 'cause we were kicking ass on some homebrew monsters.

Bruce: Again?

DM: *FINE*. Your crossbow hits. Your dagger hits. Your *magic missile* hits, even though it says *right here* that he has his *shield* spell up already. Your sword hits –

Bruce: But I haven't attacked yet!

DM: Don't interrupt me when I'm trashing my own adventure. And you, cheezy-bits boy, whatever you're about to do hits as well.

Bruce: Actually, I was going to search for secret doors while they were –

Bruce: Already tried and failed, man. He really wants us to fight these things.

Bruce: Lame, lame. I hate being railroaded.

Bruce: Did we kill that one we all attacked?

DM: Sure. What the hell. He's got 47 hit points, but y'all are just too damn good for him. Down he goes.

Bruces: [several at once] I loot the body!

DM: Dice for it and tell me who gets there first. [to the rest] There are still two of them left; what do you do?

Bruce: I tell them to drop their weapons and surrender.

DM: And I suppose you just happen to speak their language . . .

Bruce: Yep. Says so on my character sheet.

DM: I gotta see this. [peers over] You just wrote that in, didn't you?

Bruce: Yep.

DM: And I'm going to allow this because . . .

Bruce: I took some language slots, but left the languages unassigned. Figured I'd just write them in as I needed them.

DM: [pause] You know, that kind of blatant abuse deserves some respect. Fine. You speak their language.

Bruce: Really?

DM: Yes. If you've got the balls to sit there and say that, I'm not about to stand in your way.

Bruce: Wow. I always wondered if that would work. [pause] So I tell them to surrender. What happens?

Bruce: Hey, what did I find on the corpse?

DM: You [pointing at one Bruce] convince them to lay down their arms; clearly they are intimidated by your mastery of their tongue. You [pointing at the other] find, I dunno, the One Ring. It's been down here all this time. Marvelous, the way Fate works itself out.

Bruce: Cool! I put it on! Bite me, Sauron! What's in the next pocket?

And so on.

HOUSE RULES

Several aspects of gaming . . . by which, at the moment, we mean dungeon-crawling . . . are as important to play as anything in Those Books, but aren't written down. That, of course, makes them especially subject to munchkinism. Be warned, deal with them, make them your own tools . . .

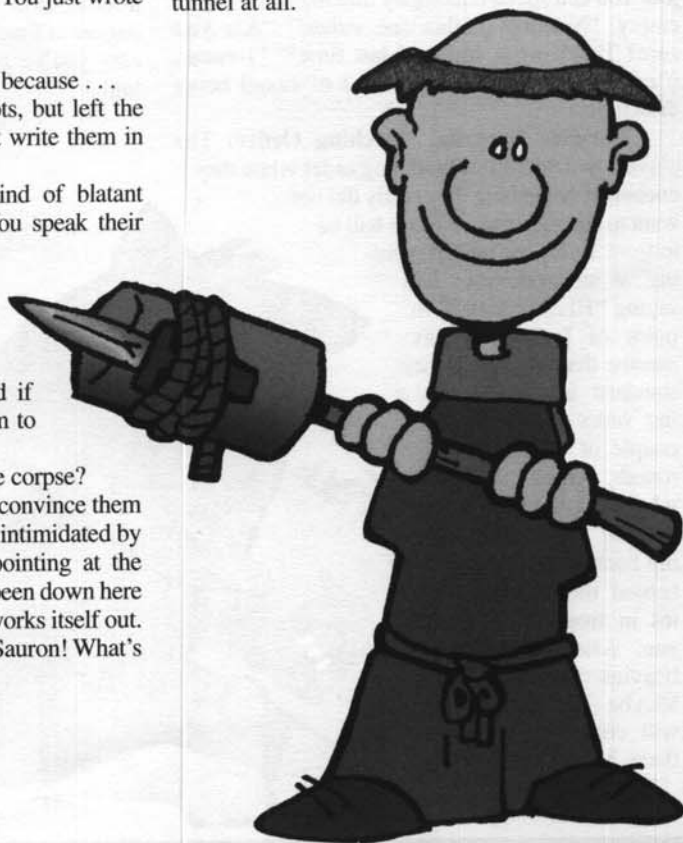
Bite me, Sauron!

MARCHING ORDER

Imagine, if your imagination stretches that far, a real-life dungeon crawl. The explorers are making their way through the darkness. Suddenly they come upon something . . .

No, they don't. Suddenly *the guy in front* comes upon something. He may say "Cool!" or "Oh, my God!" or "AIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE . . ." – the point is, the guy in front is the one it happens to. So it matters a lot, especially to *him*, who's in front.

So it is in the game. As the players romp through your lovingly crafted dungeon, robbing and slaying, it matters a lot who's in front. You don't want to tell them what they encounter and THEN ask who's in front, because, by some miracle, the munchkin in front will always be the one best suited to deal with the situation, unless it's an unspeakable menace, in which case *none* of them will be in the front; in fact, they didn't go down that tunnel at all.



Special Marching Orders

In any game – but especially if the players are highly experienced, highly munchkin, or (powers preserve us) highly experienced munchkins – there will be situations when a nonstandard marching order is called for. Some groups will work all these out in advance and name or number them, displaying in the living room a degree of planning and coordination that their real-world employers would find starkly unbelievable.

Other special marching orders will just happen . . .

Unbridled Greed Marching Order: The players will adopt this marching order when they encounter something they really want to grab, or when they find something promising, such as a large, locked oaken chest. Everyone will be in front. No one will be watching behind. You can have a lot of fun with this . . .

- ◆ If a chest contains a gas trap and *everyone* is standing around watching the thief open it, *everyone* will need to make a saving throw.

- ◆ If everyone is filling their pockets, nobody is watching behind. This is a great time for the wizard to feel a slimy tap on his shoulder. Perhaps his last words will be “Who was watching the doooooooooooooeeehhhhhhhh . . .”

- ◆ If the party is disciplined enough to post a guard on the door, put the chest far enough from the door that the door-guards can’t see what’s going on as it’s opened. Paranoia *will* eventually do its job. You can speed it along by making some chests empty. “Nothing in this one either!” “Are you sure? That’s what you said last time?” “I swear, it’s empty!” “Right . . .” (sound of sword being drawn . . .)

Horrible Surprise Marching Order: The players will adopt this marching order when they encounter something they really did not want to see right then. No one will be in front. Everyone will be pointing at someone else and saying “HE’s in front!” In point of fact, you may assume that they are in their standard marching order for a couple of melee rounds, which is what it will take for the point to nip back and hide behind the heavies in front of the van. After that, the heavies are in front. Maybe the rearguard will come up to help them. Maybe not.

Headlong Flight Marching Order: The players will adopt this marching order when all seems lost. They will all tell you “I’m in front!” You’ll have to adjudicate. Sort them in order of their encumbrance. Normally, that means the wizard is in front, scrawny legs flashing like so many lily-white pipe-cleaners, closely followed by the thief, with the heavily armed paladin bringing up the rear and the baggage-carriers already lost and eaten. For extra fun, though, the DM can assess “virtual encumbrance.” Any character who drops a magic item, or a bag of at least 500 gp, immediately moves to the front of the flight pattern, to stay there until someone else drops something . . .

Lost The Heavies Marching Order: The players will adopt this marching order when they are in deep, deep trouble. Maybe the fighters are dead, maybe they’re not . . . but if Bob the Fighter has lost his armor to a *rust monster* and is down to 6 hit points, he’s going to have a really bad attitude about marching in the front line and holding off that next throng of orcs. And when he points this out to Fred the Wizard, who is still cruising along unscratched at his 30 hard-earned hp, is Fred going to be all sympathetic and take his place? We think not. Not unless some loot changes hands, or Bob initiates his request by grabbing Fred’s throat from behind in a comradely manner. This can lead to the march order “Fred is in front, staff at the ready, alert for trouble. Bob is right behind, his dagger at Fred’s kidney.” Look, now you’ve got them roleplaying!



The only time the wizard should be in front is when the party is running away and his companions are hindered by their armor.

As the DM, you should make them define their marching order at all times. Miniatures and maps (see p. 4) are very useful for this, but you can get by if you will just ask, as often as necessary, "Who's in front? Who's next?" And, for variety and to raise the level of paranoia, "Who's in the rear?"

A good marching order will please both those who like a bit of realism, and those who merely want to wring every possible advantage out of every situation. The basic concepts of marching order were worked out thousands of years ago by the original marchers . . . armies. They're still valid. (Those whose eyes glaze over at the thought of history should *still read this stuff*, as it can bring you *in-game benefits*.)

The Point is the unit in front. In a dungeon-crawling party, point will probably be one person. The point's job is to detect trouble before it detects him. Can you say "thief"? Look for traps, look for secret doors, stop and listen. If you're attacked, flee back to your friends!

In some situations, of course, the thief is the wrong one to put on point. If the expected menace is goblin arrows, rather than pit traps, then a nice heavily armored fighter makes a good point man. If the traps are all magical, the fighters and thieves are going to suggest that the wizard take point. The wizard, if he has any sense, will resist this strenuously, knowing that you, the DM, will have put a few goblin archers out there to target his pointy hat. The only time the wizard should be in front is when the party is running away and his companions are hindered by their armor.

The Van is the military term for the main body. We suggest that you introduce the proper term to your games in order to give your players the simple pleasure of repeating "I'm in the van, heh, heh, who's driving?" and "Why can't we get rid of this thing and get an SUV?" at least once a game.

Leading the van, in most circumstances, should be a couple of strong melee fighters. Behind them should be your wizard – your soft, squishy wizard – and perhaps a ranger-type or other ranged-weapon user. The melee fighters are there to soak up damage and give the wizard(s) and archer(s) time to do their stuff. Anything the fighters can kill without the help of the guys in the second rank is probably hardly worth the time to write down the experience points.

The Rear Guard follows the van fairly closely. The purpose of the rear guard is to keep fast or stealthy monsters from coming up from behind and grabbing your squishy wizard. This is a good place to put your armored cleric, unless you have a lot of fighters. The rear guard is not quite as safe as the middle of the van, but then, if your munchkins have judged the danger level appropriately, nothing is going to finish off Brother Bob before the fighters can get back there to help him.



The Baggage Train is optional. If you have mules, hirelings, or captured monsters carrying supplies and loot, that's your baggage train! Now on the one hand, you don't want to lose that stuff. On the other hand, compared to your precious munchkin hides, it's all expendable. So you might put the rear guard behind the baggage train, to protect it . . . but you might also just let the baggage train look out for itself and let its dying cries act as an extra alarm for the rear guard.

This sounds like player information. So why are we describing all this in a book for DMs? Well, that's how it worked out. But more to the point, that's what a reasonable DM should expect the players to do, most of the time. And it's what a kind DM, faced with very young or very clueless players, should suggest. But *make them specify* what they're doing, and exactly who is where.

SPLITTING THE PARTY

This can be accomplished transversely, with a huge spring-loaded chopper that erupts from the wall at waist height . . . or vertically, from the crown of the head straight down, in which case the blade can be driven by nothing more than gravity. We recommend the latter, because it not only eliminates the victim, but ruins more of his stuff.

If your "character sheet" is kept in a 5" D-ring binder, including a change log, table of contents, index . . .
... you might be a Munchkin.

Or did you mean *separating* the party? Awww, that's not as much fun.

Some groups simply have a house rule against separating the party. Others allow it but discourage it. Advanced and serious roleplayers, which we are most certainly not, do it all the time . . . but they do other nasty stuff too, not suitable for a light-hearted book such as this. (For instance, we will point out that this very sentence is the only occurrence of the word "parley" in the entire book. And thank goodness for *that*.)

From the DM's point of view . . . and after all, this is the DM's book . . . splitting the party is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, if you can separate them you can destroy them in detail, and the survivors may not even get to loot their friends' bodies! You can dwell in loving detail on the goodies that are lost forever; the munchkins will mourn the magic items far more than the characters.

On the other hand, if you split the party, you have to either divide the group into two rooms, or put the players on their honor not to act on what they overhear . . . Aww, who are we kidding? Put them in separate rooms, and if you catch somebody listening at the door, strike his character deaf for the whole game and make the player wear earmuffs.

One other tiny advantage of splitting the party . . . they'll probably lie to each other about any good stuff they discovered while separated. And they'll certainly *suspect* treachery.

I DO WHAT I SAY

Table talk is always an issue. In some campaigns, anything said at the game table, from "I have to go to the bathroom" to "That's a mint condition *Dr. Strange*, and if you take it out of the wrapper you owe me \$200 or your left nut," is considered an in-game statement, and the DM will act on it or back up any player who does. At other tables, "I fire arrows until my quiver is empty and then leap out with my scimitar" is merely considered a sort of trial balloon, an opening to a discussion of tactics.

The first condition is hard to enforce in any group, let alone a munchkin one. We might still recommend it . . . for about 10 minutes . . . once a month, after drinks. It's funny for about that long.

The second extreme is more typical of a munchkin game. Face it . . . there will be times, lots of times, when one player expresses an idea by saying "I do thus-and-so." But it's a dumb idea, even by munchkin terms, and when his compatriots pick their jaws up off the floor, they'll explain it to him, and when he recovers from the +4 *noogies*, he'll decide to agree.

If you get in a car crash and your *character's* life flashes before your eyes . . .
... you might be a Munchkin.

So . . . and this is (believe it or not) a serious suggestion . . . an important word in the *Munchkin* DM's vocabulary is "Really?" Learn to say it with a straight face, and get your players used to the idea that if you say "Really?" and they say "Really" . . . you're going to roll those dice.

This will often lead to a lot of quick discussion, repositioning, and even changed marching orders. There will also be times when you will hear the clarion cry of "Oh, yes I do, and you can't stop me!" See, you've got them roleplaying again.

Make a Wish!

An exception to the above has to do with the *wish* spell. Any *wish*, however limited, is a very powerful weapon in the hands of a munchkin. It would be no fun at all if you, as the DM, didn't have the ability to fire that weapon yourself when it was aimed right at the owner's foot.

So . . . When someone is in possession of a *wish* item (whether they know it or not) – if they verbalize an appropriate wish while at the table, it works. By "appropriate," here, we mean "within the power of that type of *wish*," and not "something that anyone in their right mind would ever spend a *wish* to get." If somebody looks up from the table and says "I wish it wasn't Daylight Savings Time," "I wish that damn dog would quit licking my toes," or "I wish we had a pizza," then the *wish* is used and, in the game world, they got what they wished for. You should be generous and make it a *very good* pizza.

Expect some really bitter howling about this. But you won't be able to hear it, because you'll be laughing too hard.



"BEFORE HE DOES THAT . . ."

A related issue is the player who will listen to what someone else is doing and then interject happily (sometimes a quarter-hour later) "Before he does that, I do . . ." If you let this go too far, your munchkins will ret-con themselves all the way back to the beginning of the adventure and earnestly list the things that they are now adding to their packs before starting out. Coincidentally, those will be just the things that they now need, including the rare herb that repels the particular monster you have just sicced on them.

But all right, that's an extreme case. What about the one that sounds reasonable? Hey, they're your players. If you want to let them get away with a certain amount of backfilling, that's fine. But again . . . once you say "Really?" and they say "Really," they shouldn't be running time backwards, even a little bit. Unless they're willing to blow a *wish*.

SPLITTING THE LOOT

This is not exactly a house rule; it's a matter of party custom, and the DM does not control it. It is always interesting to watch the way players find a fair (or, for munchkins, an unfair) division of their spoils.

The DM should, though, be ready to get involved if very young or inexperienced players are involved, either to give suggestions or to stop the group's bully from grabbing absolutely everything. If the DM is of a Solomonic bent, then he may also step in to solve a dispute between very experienced and committed munchkins: "Your fierce tugging causes the hilt to separate from the blade. You both have a piece of *Excalibur*. Now are you happy?" They won't be, but maybe you will have a wee smile on your face . . . until it's time to arbitrate the next dispute. "But I'm Thor's third cousin twice removed. Says so on my character sheet. Mjolnir must be mine!"

DICE ETIQUETTE

Sparkly treasure. They glitter and gleam from the store shelves. We can't have enough . . . we covet those our neighbor possesses and jealously guard our own. Dice.

No subject can yank a munchkin out of character – or what passes for character – faster than dice, and the rolling of same. The house rules that grow up around dice are more serious than some people's religions. Not yours, of course; yours is perfect, and your children are so smart!

Ahem. Dice.

If you think Boromir is a wimp
for getting waxed by a mere
couple hundred orcs . . .
. . . you might be a Munchkin.



♦ **Don't Touch My Dice!** Some people are unreasonably possessive about "their" dice, while others figure anything on the table is there for everyone to use. Get these guys on the same wavelength, or the worst bloodshed won't be in the dungeon.

♦ **Visible Rolls.** The wise DM will adopt a strict double standard. Players' dice *must* be rolled where the DM can see them, and left in place until he *does* see them. The DM can reject any dice that he finds hard to read. The DM's dice, on the other hand, may be rolled in secret whenever he pleases. (Remember that, as the DM, you are God. Your dice say what you say they say. If you want to hold both your hands in the air over your DM screen, look down, and say "Rattlerattlerattle. It's an 18," you can.)

♦ **Computer Die Rollers.** A bad idea, usually, for two reasons. First, it's awfully easy to rig a program to "load" the dice. In the second place, dice are cooler. So there.

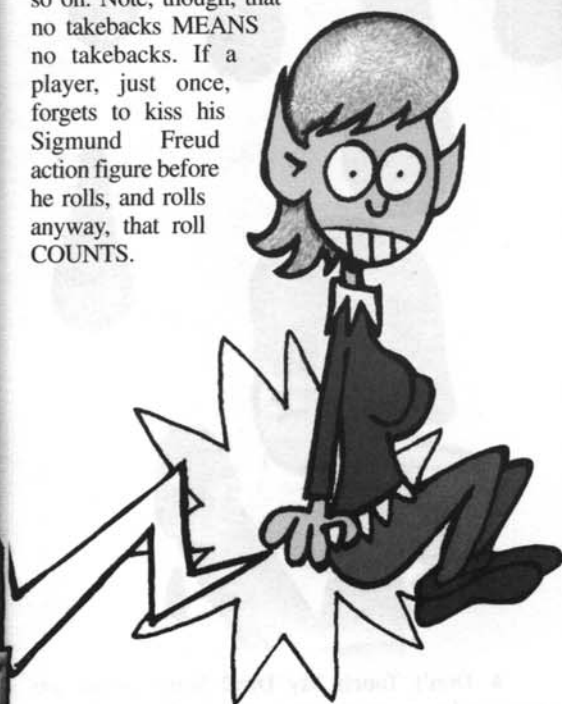
♦ **Cocked Dice.** There has to be some advance understanding of what makes a die "cocked" enough to reroll, and it has to be applied equally to the good and the bad rolls. And if the die goes on the floor, do you hunt it down and read it, do you pick it up and roll over, or do you consider that die cursed until it can be dunked in holy water, leave it there, and take the critical failure on that roll?

♦ **Special Rolling Techniques.** Not funny. There are people who can throw a die without its bouncing, but you don't have to put up with it.

♦ **Loaded or Cheating Dice.** Really not funny. Unless they're yours. Or unless you know about them and authorize them as a magic item . . .

♦ **Taking Back Rolls.** A DM who allows this is a very, very, very, very, very generous and loving DM. Enough said.

♦ **"Lucky" Dice.** It's entirely up to you how much ritual you put up with in terms of what dice the players roll, what they do with them beforehand, and so on. Note, though, that no takebacks MEANS no takebacks. If a player, just once, forgets to kiss his Sigmund Freud action figure before he rolls, and rolls anyway, that roll COUNTS.



REFERENCE BOOKS

Some games specifically allow or forbid the players to have certain gamebooks. (In *Paranoia*, for instance, it is treasonous and punishable by death for a player to admit *knowledge* of certain game rules.) In other games and other campaigns, this is a matter for house rules. Sort it out before the players bring their personal copies of *The Extremely Big Book of Monsters and How To Kill Them*.

While you're at it, settle whether they are allowed to bring *nongame* references to the table. It can be argued that a high enough skill in any field of knowledge should entitle the player to use a reference to that material which his *character* would know. But remember . . . it's a munchkin that's arguing that. Allow it if it works for you, forbid it if it doesn't.

WE SEARCH THE ROOM

The monsters are dead. The wounds of the munchkins are healed or ignored. Now it's time to *loot*.

Many a campaign has turned into a hiding-the-treasure arms race, with DMs concealing the goodies in more and more devious places, and munchkins working harder and harder to make sure not a single gold piece slips through their fingers. This can end any number of ways, not least-appropriate of which is the death of all the PCs and the decision of the DM to take up needlework. Or the DM and players can come to an agreement that eventually they'll find everything if

If your Challenge Rating is written in scientific notation . . .
... you might be a Munchkin.

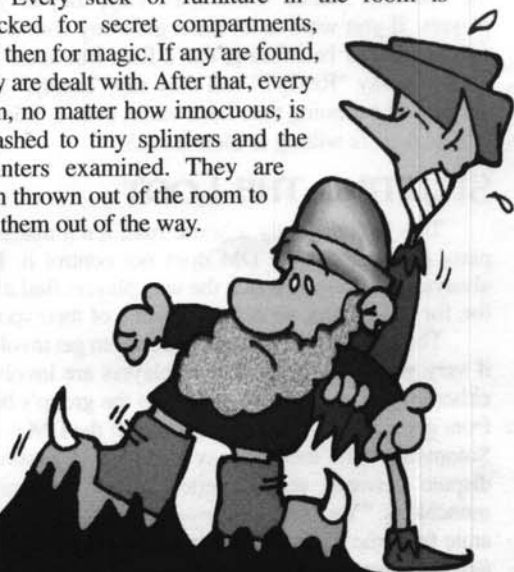
they take long enough . . . so how long do they want to spend in any given room?

Or the battle of wits can continue until the party's Standard Looting Procedure is something like this:

The stupidest PC, and therefore least likely to detect anything, is placed on guard.

The bodies are piled in a corner. They'll be looted last.

Every stick of furniture in the room is checked for secret compartments, and then for magic. If any are found, they are dealt with. After that, every item, no matter how innocuous, is smashed to tiny splinters and the splinters examined. They are then thrown out of the room to get them out of the way.



Yes, all this takes a while. But what's time to a munchkin? If the DM tells them they are getting hungry, the munchkins may point out that the room is full of almost-nutritious monster corpses awaiting only the cleric's *purify food and drink* spell. If wandering monsters appear, their experience points, bodies, and loot can go into the pile. We don't see a problem here, and neither should the DM; if this is handled properly, the munchkins may spend the whole session in one room.

Heavier items are then given the same treatment. Anything that can be smashed is. Anything that cannot be smashed will have to prove it. The trash is thrown out of the room.

Any carpeting or wood flooring is ripped up as carefully as possible and the back checked for maps or writing. It is then torn to bits, and the bits examined for hidden items, and so on until bare rock is reached. If earth floor is reached, the earth is systematically dug up to a depth of a foot, or more if the slightest sign of previous disturbance is detected. Everything removed is thrown out of the room.

Likewise, any wall coverings are removed as carefully as possible, and treated in the same way.

The thief checks every square foot of the bare floor, and every square foot of bare wall, and every square foot of *ceiling*, for hidden compartments. If necessary (and it will be, if he's a halfling), he is hoisted on another PC's shoulders to do so.

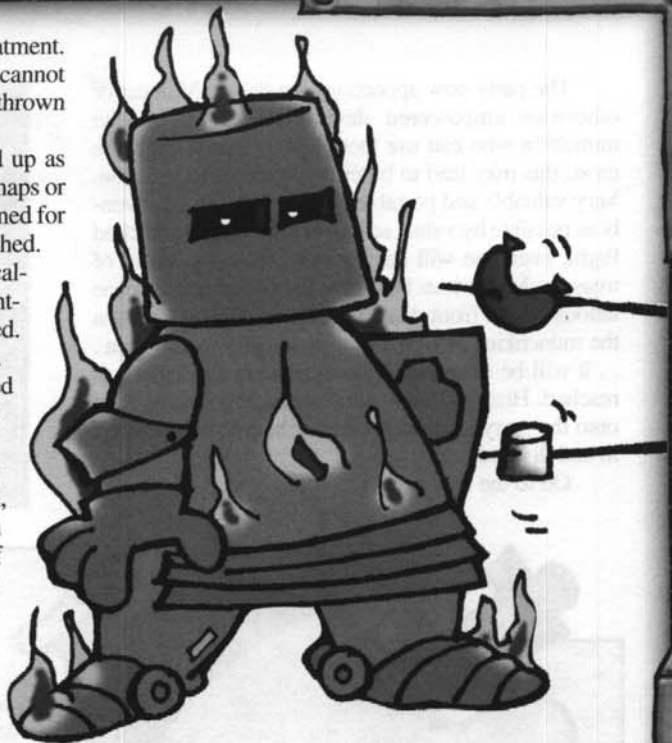
The wizard checks every square foot of floor, and every square foot of wall, and every square foot of *ceiling*, for magic. If necessary, he is likewise hoisted on another PC's shoulders.

The dwarf conducts a similar check for hidden doors, slanted floors, and anything else that dwarves can detect in the current edition of the rules.

Now the room is, in theory, completely swept. Time to attend to the bodies. First, the weapons are checked, and checked again, for magic, and the character with the highest applicable skill determines whether any of the weapons have nonmagical bonuses. If experimentation is necessary, there are bodies handy. Any jewel on a weapon is examined very carefully in case it may be a switch, a latch to a hidden compartment, or the handle of a removable blade or other item. Otherwise-ordinary weapons that have jewels or precious-metal decoration are stripped for easier carrying unless the party's burden is currently very light.

Then jewelry is given the same treatment. All jewelry is treated as treasure and carried along undamaged, even if it seems to be base metal and no magic can be detected, because it is very light, and you never know . . .

If anybody has *speak with dead*, the intelligent monsters in the body pile can be asked for suggestions as to what room should be visited next. Be sure to cross-examine them both as to the loot that can be gained and the Challenge Rating of the inhabitants.



Then the clothing and armor is removed and examined. Individual items are checked for magic and then for hidden writing. Anything not magical gets the tear-to-bits treatment. However, being bloody and therefore likely to attract vermin, the clothing is not thrown outside unless the door guard is bored and wants to pick up some cheap XP.

The hair and fur of the naked corpses is combed carefully. Vermin are discarded; hidden treasure is kept. Tattoos are examined very carefully and subjected to *detect magic*. If it seems advisable, they are removed and added to the treasure heap.

If the monsters possess useful or valuable fur or body parts – the wizard should again be consulted – these body parts are now removed.

The investigation of the corpses now proceeds to their interior. Intelligent monsters are suspected of having swallowed treasure or otherwise secreted it about their person. Unintelligent monsters are suspected of having swallowed treasure-laden victims. In either case, the entire gastrointestinal tract of each corpse must be thoroughly investigated. The party will have, of course, brought along a small strainer for this purpose.

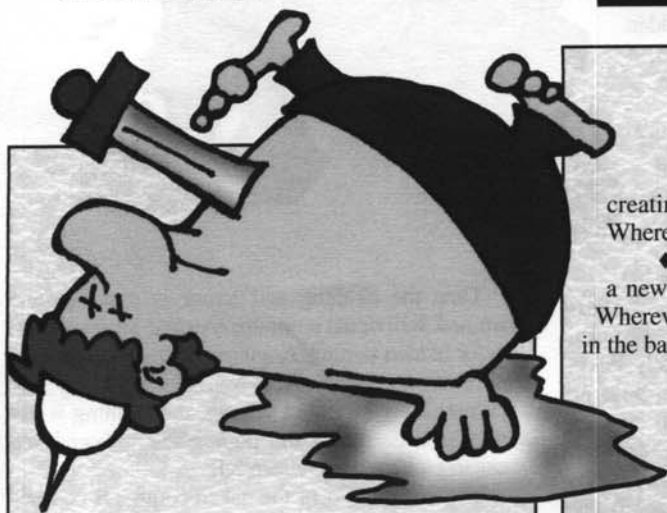
The rest of the monster should then be cut into bits small enough that no internal hiding place will be missed. The offal is thrown into the corner, rather than outside the room, unless the party is specifically *trying* to attract monsters.

The room has now been thoroughly searched; it's a bare cube of rock containing nothing but a pile of bloody meat and – if the munchkins are having a good day – a pile of treasure. Throughout the process, all items found have been placed in a pile where everyone can see them and nothing can find its way into the wrong pocket before division of the spoils.

The party now apports the goods. Magical or otherwise empowered devices are given to the munchkin who can use them best or needs them the most; this may lead to bitter argument or negotiation. Very valuable and portable items are divided as evenly as possible by value, so that in the event of panicked flight, everyone will have a worthwhile pocketful of treasure. Mysterious but fairly light stuff (e.g., arcane tattoos played from dead wizards) is divided between the munchkins as well, but only to carry, not to own . . . it will be examined by experts once the surface is reached. Heavier loot is not divided, but simply piled onto the party's hirelings or pack beasts; to be cashed in and divided later.

On to the next room!

If you call your familiar Fluffy, but everyone else calls her Tiamat . . .
... you might be a Munchkin.



Last Rites

What if a PC was killed during the fight? Well, it depends.

If resurrection is cheap and easy, and if the PC had valuable skills or knew important secrets, and if hauling the body around isn't too much trouble, then it will be relieved of any immediately useful magic items, propped in a corner while the room is searched, and taken along afterward. Clever munchkins will find lots of uses for a body, including mounting it on a stick to poke up from behind barricades to draw fire. (They can't very well do that with monster bodies, because the monster bodies have all been chopped to hamburger.)

On the other hand, if resurrection is inconvenient or the other munchkins valued the deceased's magic items more than they do the player's good will, the body will be treated like any other monster corpse . . . but it will be checked especially thoroughly, and cut into especially small bits, because they know he had lots of good stuff, and he was probably very sneaky about hiding it!



Adventure Ideas

As the DM, you'll be responsible for creating new adventures for your group. Where will you get ideas?

◆ Tell the PCs "You see in a dream that a new portal has opened to the underworld." Wherever they are at the moment, the portal is in the back yard. Start rolling dice.

◆ Whatever was on TV last night.

◆ Did they have fun last time? Good. Play that one again. Start at the other end or something.

◆ Have you got a big book of monsters? Cool. Pick one randomly and tell them to fight it. If it's a wussy monster, make them fight a lot of them.

Identifying Magic Items

From time to time . . . or maybe all the time . . . the PCs will find items that they are quite sure are magical, but with unknown powers. High-level munchkins will be able to identify many magic items on their own. Lower-level ones won't get past "It got a hole in it . . . I know, it's a ring!"

One method of identification, of course, is the time-honored "Mess with it and see what happens" system. This can provide no end of amusement for you and the other players, and even the grubbiest munchkin will usually see the justice in "you put it on, you take what happens to you." They may, of course, suspect that the nature of the item changed when they announced they were going to put it on. You wouldn't do *that*, would you?

It is deliciously sadistic to give the PCs an item that would solve their worst problem, if only they could figure out what it was. Decent DMs would

give them a clue. Now, what clue do you most want to give them? Maybe "Shower more often" would take priority . . .

In the end, of course, the PCs may wind up taking their mystery finds to the surface, where some hugely powerful old wizard will be able to identify them. He will, by definition, be far too potent for them to challenge or even stand up to, and far too smart to be cheated. A typical response might be:

"The copper ring contains one *limited wish*. The lamp is a *lamp of big blue Robin Williams-voiced djinn summoning*. That big stick is an *infection staff*. That information will cost you 10,000 gold pieces, payable now, or I can just keep the *wish ring* as payment. As for the mummified hand, it is nothing that concerns you, so I'll take charge of it. Have a nice day."



If there's a 9th-level spell
named after your character . . .
and he's a fighter . . .
. . . you might be a Munchkin.



TABLES

A huge part of the munchkin experience is . . . tables. Tables to awe us all with their near-infinite possibilities. ("Ten times 12 times 12 times 8 times 6 times 6 is . . . my God, there are 414,720 different kinds of molds, puddings, jellies, and flan in this adventure! What artistry!") Tables to prove to one and all that the DM is being fair. ("Yep, see, right here on this table . . . you CAN encounter the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse as wandering monsters.") Tables to give us all more reasons to buy more lovely, sparkly dice. Dice of all sizes, shapes, and colors. Ah, yes . . . colors . . .

COLORS

Serious roleplayers like to know everything about everything they encounter in order to completely immerse themselves in the fictional world that they and the DM are creating. Isn't that special?

Munchkins, on the other hand, like to know everything about everything they encounter so they can more easily kill it, loot it, and/or . . . hmm, there isn't really anything else, is there?

And color is perhaps the most important part of a description. It's simple, unambiguous, and can be shown on a miniature. Ever since the Great Old Ones first realized that a **Red** Dragon could have different stats from a **Green** Dragon, we've been asking "What color is it?"

So now everything should have a color, and the color should mean something, unless it doesn't. After all, the White Gazebo takes double damage from fire and flame, while the Off-White Gazebo is vulnerable only to cold damage. The Green Plinksnappers are hostile to all dungeon explorers and must be attacked immediately, while the Puce Plinksnappers are harmless and friendly and can therefore be stabbed in the back after they treat you to a feast. If you don't specify colors when you describe things, your munchkins will be missing out on these valuable clues! But being munchkins, they'll ask. And if you haven't decided a color in advance, or if you want to let the Holy Dice decide . . .

TABLE 1: COLORS

d12 Roll	Color
1	White
2	Black
3	Red
4	Orange
5	Yellow
6	Green
7	Blue
8	Purple
9	Brown
10	Metallic
11	Gray
12	Clash! Roll twice on this table

But that's only the beginning . . . only what a munchkin could perceive at a distance, perhaps. For a finer shade of meaning, roll again on the appropriate subtable.

SUBTABLE 1.1: WHITE

d10 Roll	Color
1	Snow
2	Driven snow
3	Driven-through snow
4	Alabaster
5	Bone (Whatever you're rolling for is now undead. Roll for initiative.)
6	Ivory
7	Pearl
8	Cream
9	Curdled cream
10	Off-

SUBTABLE 1.2: BLACK

d10 Roll	Color
1	Jet
2	Pitch
3	Carbon
4	Night
5	Satan's heart
6	Ink
7	Raven
8	Soot
9	Ebony
10	Raven/Crow (50% chance of either)

SUBTABLE 1.3: RED

d10 Roll	Color
1	Arterial
2	Venous
3	Mars
4	Crimson
5	Scarlet (If this is for a creature, it now speaks with an exaggerated and obviously fake Southern accent . . . even if it could not speak at all before.)
6	Cherry
7	Ruby (Woo hoo hoo!! Triple value!)
8	Fire-engine (+10 on all saves against fire effects)
9	Pink (Grants +1 Charisma to women who carry/wear/use/are this item/creature, but -1 to men.)
10	Rust (If the item in question is a monster, you know what to do.)

Oh yeah . . . all this stuff is Closed Content. Nyah nyah!

SUBTABLE 1.4: ORANGE

d10 Roll	Color
1	Fluorescent
2	Tangerine
3	Nectarine
4	Apricot
5	Peach
6	Pumpkin
7	Carrot
8	Sweet potato
9	Mandarin
10	Burnt (may be combined with any of the above, if you can stand the smell.)

SUBTABLE 1.5: YELLOW

d10 Roll	Color
1	Amber
2	Canary
3	Banana
4	Lemon
5	Honey
6	Saffron
7	Sulfur
8	Mustard
9	Maize (Anyone viewing this is subject to a <i>maize</i> spell, from the <i>Munchkin Player's Handbook</i> , until this color is covered or otherwise rendered not visible.)
10	American beer

SUBTABLE 1.6: GREEN

d10 Roll	Color
1	Avocado
2	Jade
3	Holly
4	Olive
5	Olive oil
6	Olive drab
7	Day-Glo
8	Money (gain 1,000 gp – Americans only)
9	Shamrock
10	Lime

SUBTABLE 1.7: BLUE

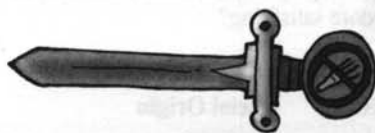
d10 Roll	Color
1	Baby
2	Toddler
3	Kid
4	Teen-ager
5	Adult
6	Old lady hair
7	Midnight
8	Cyan
9	Mood ("I'm so depressed." Player gets a pain all up and down the diodes on his left side. If he has diodes. If not, he just eats an entire packet of iron rations, drinks a whole wineskin, and stares at the wall.)
10	Sapphire (Woo hoo! Triple value!)

SUBTABLE 1.8: PURPLE

d10 Roll	Color
1	Amethyst (Woo hoo! Double value!)
2	Puce
3	Lavender (As pink, but double the bonus or penalty.)
4	Magenta
5	Mauve
6	Grape
7	Raisin (Bards, this is your cue!)
8	Eggplant (Euwww.)
9	Fuchsia
10	Violent (no, it's not a typo – think bruises)

SUBTABLE 1.9: BROWN

d10 Roll	Color
1	Beige
2	Dun
3	Ecru
4	Khaki
5	Mocha
6	Chocolate
7	Dark chocolate (Mmmmm.)
8	Umber.
9	Toast. Roll a d4 for light, medium, dark, or burned.
10	Leather



SUBTABLE 1.10: METALLIC

d10 Roll	Color
1	Gold
2	Silver
3	Bronze
4	Tin
5	Nickel
6	Copper
7	Iron
8	Mercury
9	Lead
10	Uranium (If a PC retains this item, he begins suffering from radiation sickness. See any SF sourcebook for rules.)

SUBTABLE 1.11: GRAY

d10 Roll	Color
1	Dark gray
2	Light gray
3	Medium gray
4	Charcoal gray
5	Salt-and-pepper
6	Slate gray
7	Taupe
8	Ash gray
9	Battleship gray
10	Neutral (Lawful and Chaotic characters may not use this item).

POLEARMS

Polearms are that class of completely unwieldy weapons, often used from horseback, which no sane person would ever haul around for any reason other than tournament combat.

We *are*, however, discussing munchkins.

As a result, they're likely to glom onto a 12' spearlike weapon they find in some poor beastie's lair, and the first thing they'll want to know is what it's called. Suddenly, your brilliant bit of color text for the monster has turned into a chance for you to display your ignorance in the teeth of superior player knowledge, as you come out with some absurd name like, we dunno, "Bohemian ear-spoon." You do not want that to happen.

Here's what you do. No matter what the weapon actually is, you say it has a 10' reach and does 2d8 points of damage with a critical threat range of 19-20, doing triple damage on a successful crit. Then you roll once on *Table 2.1: Racial Origin*, and twice on *Table 2.2: Name of Polearm*. If the results on 2.2 are the same, drop one of them; if they're different, hyphenate them, and you're done! Never again will you be saying, "You see a . . . uh . . . a big pokey thing," convulsing your players in laughter! No, you'll be saying, "You see an orcish spear-pike – as it erupts from your abdomen in a spray of bile, blood, and bowel." Now isn't that more satisfying?

TABLE 2.1: RACIAL ORIGIN

d10 Roll	Racial Origin
1	Dwarven
2	Elven
3	Gnomish
4	Halfling
5	Orcish
6	Goblin
7	Hobgoblin
8	Human
9	Ogre
10	Pixie (this would be a very small big pokey thing . . .)

TABLE 2.2: NAME OF POLEARM

d10 Roll	Polearm Name
1	Glaive
2	Guisarme
3	Halberd
4	Pike
5	Lance
6	Spear
7	Ranseur
8	Big Pokey Thing
9	Great- (It's bigger! It hurts more! Double damage! Rah!)
10	Roll twice more – you've got one o' them complicated weapons.

No matter what the weapon actually is, you say it has a 10' reach and does 2d8 points of damage with a critical threat range of 19-20, doing triple damage on a successful crit.

LISTENING AT A DOOR

"I listen at the door."

"OK, but –"

"No buts! I'm listening, I'm not deafened, so what do I hear?"

"You hear the ogre chieftain saying, 'Look at stupid thief! Stupid thief is listening at open door!' You also hear the WHOOSH of his greataxe swinging toward your neck. Briefly."

"I'm immune to greataxes. Says so on my character sheet."

"Nice try. Start rolling . . . and this time, you'll want a higher Intelligence."



Every now and then, you want to give your players a thrill, and there's no better way to do that than by letting them hear something exotic through a closed door. There's much entertainment to be had in watching them scramble around, preparing to fight what turns out to be an illusion, a hallucination, or simply a trick of the acoustics – they actually heard sounds from two rooms over . . .

In any case, sometimes a DM is tapped for inspiration. We understand that (ask Your Overworked Authors about the writing history on this project sometime), and we are here to help. When you find yourself dealing with the sort of thief who has to listen at every single door, and wants you to just *know* he's doing that at the next door because he did it at the last 310, the following table of mysterious noises will help.

Ten Bad Things For a Hireling to Say

(Specifically, 10 things the players won't want to hear from their hireling, but which the DM probably won't be able to resist.)

10. "I was walking in the back there, and I don't *remember* there being a dark elf in the party. Did I miss a meeting?"

9. "While you guys were asleep, some feller with a suit and briefcase went pawing through your stuff. He said he was from the government, so I figured it was OK."

8. "Did I mention that I speak the Black Tongue of Mordor? Listen to this . . ."

7. "C'mere, Hastur! That's a good boy, Hastur! Hastur . . . HASTur!"

6. "Hey, my dad showed me his own rib cage once, too. But only the once, 'cause he died that night in his sleep. Whoops, bedtime – pleasant dreams!"

5. "I know I should have asked you first, Mr. Archmage, sir, but I started the fire with all those little carved sticks you had in the bag you've been carrying. I hope that's OK."

4. "All those swords and all that armor were getting really greasy, so I let 'em soak in brine overnight. They should be fine now."

3. "Oops. I think that used to be expensive."

2. "Y'all don't have to worry about walking funny no more; I ran on ahead and broke all those strings they pulled across the corridor. I don't think anyone spotted me."

And the absolute worst thing for an NPC to say . . .

1. "Oooh, that'll leave a mark."



- 7 "A giant tent has snuffed out the sun! It is the end!"
- 8 You hear labored breathing, as though a large creature has been wounded. But you hear it in your *other* ear. Switching ears on the door also switches the ear the noise is in.
- 9 "Be kind to your web-footed friends
For a duck may be somebody's mother . . ."
- 10 You hear the ocean. Complete with shouts of "Shark!" And your ear is wet.
- 11 You don't hear anything, but some long, wax-covered hairs are poking through and tickling your ear.
- 12 "If you tell them no one's in here, I'll bring you 100 gold pieces tonight when they're all asleep."
- 13 "Nine. Eight. Seven. Six . . ."
- 14 "I'm sorry, God has stepped out for a few minutes. Would you care to leave a prayer at the sound of the tone?"
- 15 "Ave, cives. Mihi nomen est Marcus Antonius."
- 16 "How many guys with one ear glued to a door does it take to feed a dragon?"
- 17 You hear a low voice. It seems to be . . . giggling.
- 18 From the other side of the door, you hear what sounds like rolling dice, followed by "He doesn't hear anything."
- 19 You hear the opening strains of John Philip Sousa's "Liberty Bell March," then a loud SPLUT noise, then nothing.
- 20 "Rosebud . . ."

TABLE 3. MYSTERIOUS

SPUR-OF-THE-MOMENT NOISES

Roll Mysterious Spur-of-the-Moment Noise

- 1 You hear Rod Serling, whispering in your ear: "It is an hour of pleasure and carefree recreation. There's a puppet up ahead. It's Howdy Doody Time."
- 2 You hear . . . nothing. Not even the blood rushing through your ear. Not the breathing of your companions. Not the muted drip of water on stone. Not even the absence of noise that deafness brings.
- 3 It's a barbershop quartet! Further listening confirms that, yes, it is a *gnome* barbershop quartet. Take 1d4 points of damage.
- 4 "Good, he took the bait. Now, *gently*, insert the red-hot wire."
- 5 It's your voice – not the voice everyone else hears when you speak, but the voice *you* hear. It's saying, "Please let me back in."
- 6 So *that's* what Ceti Alpha eels sound like from the inside! (If you don't know what Ceti Alpha eels are, take 1d6 points anti-geek damage, then go watch *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.)

SMELLS

One of the most evocative senses is smell, but it is also one of the most overlooked. Just a few well-chosen adjectives can be having people wrinkling their noses in disgust or twitching their whiskers in delight. (Unless they don't have whiskers – but they're really missing out.)

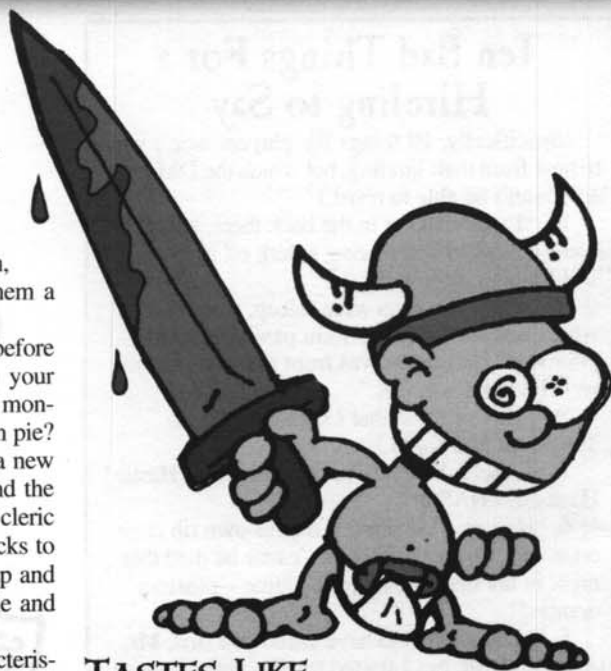
When can you use this? Well, to start with, just for (pardon the expression) flavor. Give them a stink occasionally just to worry them.

If you're the sort of DM who gives clues before unleashing the Horrors of the Damned upon your players, you can assign characteristic smells to monsters. What if red dragons all smell like pumpkin pie? If nothing else, this will condition the party to a new routine . . . after the thief listens at the door and the mage casts *Detect Magic* on the door and the cleric casts *Detect Evil* at the door and the dwarf checks to see if it really is a door, the gnome can come up and say "Okay, I'm putting my nose by the keyhole and taking a deep breath. What do I smell?"

Potions, of course, all have their own characteristic smells; you can learn a lot by sniffing the potion. It's a shame that so many of the really dangerous ones, and some of the most valuable ones, smell like "This is so wonderful I have to drink it RIGHT NOW eeeeeearggghhhhhh . . ."

TABLE 4: SMELLS

d12 Roll	Smell
1	Baking bread . . . that's been in the oven WAY too long.
2	You've never really been close enough to the hind end of a woolly mammoth to get a good whiff, but if you had, you imagine it would smell only a bit worse than this.
3	Gold! I smell gold!
4	You don't smell anything, but your canary just keeled over.
5	It's a delicate mixture of sulfur and burning leaves.
6	Ewwwwwwww! Wet dwarf!!
7	Does your character know what phosphoric acid smells like? No? Oh, well, never mind then.
8	Chocolate! No, wait, that's algae. Oooh, chocolate-covered algae!
9	You don't know what you smell, but there's a lot of it and it's heading this way. Perhaps you should turn around and – ohhhh, too late.
10	You didn't change your socks this morning, did you?
11	A pine tree? In a dungeon? No, wait, it's just an air freshener.
12	Normally, the smell of roast elf meat is nauseating, but you've been on iron rations for so long that you're half tempted to fight the four dozen guards just to get to the cooking fire. And you are an elf.



TASTES LIKE . . .

The especially bold (read: foolish) adventurer may occasionally not only listen to, or inhale deeply of, unknown substances, but may even scrape a little bit up to taste. This is rarely wise, but can be the stuff of comedy. But even if your players aren't the sort of idiots who randomly lick the tunnel walls (there is, in fact, a story here, but we're not going to tell it) you'll realize that as the DM you have a lot of opportunities to invoke a description of taste. Think of . . .

◆ **Dungeon rations.** Especially captured dungeon rations.

◆ **The results of magically created food and drink.** Worse yet, the result when a desperate mage casts a *purify food* spell on say, the back half of a long-dead *rust monster*.

◆ **Potions.** They don't have to taste *anything* like they smell.

◆ **Poisons.** Mmmm, poisons.

Taste can be a valuable aid to making your storytelling come to life . . .

(*Stop me! Stop me! I want to make a joke about "flavor text" here! I'm going to do it . . . I'm going to do it . . . Okay, I'm better now.*)

. . . especially if you can mimic the taste of a typical dungeon slime in your own kitchen, and plop a bowl right in the middle of the table, with crackers. (And anyone who doesn't try it loses a level – how rude, not to eat your cooking!)

Failing culinary skill, however, you can make do with the following table.

Toot! Toot! Please keep your hands and feet inside the plot at all times!

TABLE 5. TASTES LIKE . . .

d100 Roll Tastes Like . . .

01	"I've got good news and bad news. The good news is, that shiny stuff is definitely gold. The bad news . . . well, do you remember the goose that laid the golden eggs? Well, that's not all she laid."
02	"Imagine that you let a grapefruit rot in the bottom drawer of your fridge for, oh, say, a decade. And imagine that your soy sauce and pigs' feet leaked into the same drawer. Now imagine taking a big spoonful of that mixture and swilling it around in your mouth for a while. This is worse."
03	This is so bad, not even an Australian would eat it.
04	You have found the soup pot where all <i>E. coli</i> go to die.
05	"OK, so this is green slime, and I shouldn't have tasted it. But it kinda grows on you, y'know?"
06	Hey, that toadstool tastes just like filet mignon . . . dipped in arsenic.
07	Mmmm, orc tongue. You gotta love food that tastes you back.
08-100	Chicken. (Unless you are supposedly eating chicken, in which case, reroll. Twice.)

DUNGEON DRESSING

This term should be fairly self-explanatory; it's all the stuff you slather on near the end, to make the dungeon more exciting, or something like that. It substitutes for actual plot, in many cases . . . not that munchkins are the most critical of audiences to begin with.

TABLE 6. DUNGEON DRESSING

d12 Roll Dressing

1	Ranch
2	Bleu Cheese
3	Roquefort
4	Vinaigrette
5	French
6	Honey Mustard
7	Oil and Vinegar
8	Russian
9	Thousand Island
10	Caesar
11	Tomato and Herb
12	Roll twice and mix 'em up. If you get 12 again, well, you <i>are</i> adventuresome, aren't you?

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Why on earth would we *END* the book with this table? Wouldn't it have made more sense to put it at the beginning?

Yeah, but the first half of the book is already laid out. Heck, the first half of this **chapter** is laid out.

No problem. I can explain it.

Yeah? How?

Hide and watch . . .

All right. Here you are at the end of the book. You're ready to start your adventure. Err . . . almost ready.

How *do* you start?

Why, you start the adventure the way you'll continue it and the way you'll end it. Roll a d20 . . .

1	The munchkins find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit.
2	The munchkins are someplace or other, as though it mattered where. They discover stairs leading down. They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit.
3	The munchkins are walking through the forest. Suddenly the ground gives way, and they fall through blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit.
4	The munchkins are walking through an alleyway. Suddenly the cobblestones give way, and they fall through blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit.
5	The munchkins are summoned to a secret meeting by promises of rich rewards. In a dingy basement room they wait for their contact. Suddenly the floor gives way, and they fall through blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit.
6	The munchkins are buying magical items. They attempt to haggle with the wizard. He grows offended and points his wand at them. "Come back when you have more gold!" he laughs. Suddenly the ceiling gives way, and they fall through blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit.
7	The munchkins hear a rumor that prayer at the altar of Kazzorath the Mighty will give serious in-game benefits and possibly even stat bonuses. They rush to the Cathedral of Kazzorath and prostrate themselves before the altar. Suddenly the marble slabs give way, and they fall through blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit. They have all gone up a level.
8	The munchkins are in the tavern. The stew is bad, and they rush en masse to the privy. Suddenly the seats give way, and they fall through blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit. Roll on the Smell Table, above.
9	The munchkins are in the middle of an entirely different adventure. Suddenly the plot gives way, and they fall through blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit.
10	The munchkins are passing through a village. The villagers cry out when they approach the well: "No! Don't drink! It's cursed!" Suddenly their minds give way, and they leap into blackness! They find themselves in a 10' × 10' room. There is one exit. They are all soaking wet.
11-20	Subtract 10 from the result and read as above, but replace "blackness" with "a gray void."

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