

D&D Next Playtest Update

December 17, 2012

Welcome to the D&D Next playtest! This is an exciting opportunity to try out pieces of the next iteration of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and to provide your feedback.

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

Using This Material

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

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

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

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

Using this Document

Many areas of the documents in the current playtest packet have been revised or expanded. This document highlights some of the additions, deletions, and revisions.

General

Levels 11–20: The playtest now supports play through level 20.

Critical Hits: The rule for critical hits has been revised.

Falling: Rules for falling have been added.

Two-Weapon Fighting: Two-weapon fighting has been updated to be a more accessible option.

Casting in Armor: Rules for casting in armor are now available.

Death Saving Throws: The timing of these saving throws has been changed, and a benefit for rolling a natural 20 has been added.

Weapon Proficiency: Rules for weapon proficiencies are now defined in the rules.

Grappling: The rules for grappling (formerly known as grabbing) have been fleshed out.

Damage Types: The description of force damage has changed, and holy and unholy damage have been removed.

Improvements in Clarity: The rules for opportunity attacks, targeting with spells, and reactions have been revised to increase clarity.

Creating a Character

Skill Dice: Characters now receive skill dice, instead of bonuses to individual skills.

XP Advancement Values: The number of experience points required to level up has been changed for levels 1–20.

Backgrounds and Skills

Skill Dice: Skill dice now replace individual skill bonuses. This section includes a description of how skill dice are used.

Classes

Cleric

- The cleric's Channel Divinity feature has been restored and revised.
- The Cleric Spells per Day table has been updated.
- The Deity feature has been updated to have a greater impact on the cleric's features, including on cantrips and weapon and armor proficiencies.
- Three new deities have been added: the Arcanist, the Reaper, and the Stormcaller.
- The cleric now has access to the Combat Expertise feature.

Fighter

- The fighter's expertise dice are now called martial damage dice, and the dice progression has changed.
- Expertise is now called Combat Expertise, and deadly strike is no longer a maneuver. It is instead part of the class feature.
- The fighter's extra attack has been removed.
- The maneuvers available to the fighter have changed.
- Parry has become a fighter class feature.
- Fighting styles have been revised.

Rogue

- Expertise is now called Combat Expertise. The martial damage dice progression has also changed.
- Skill Mastery is no longer a maneuver and is instead a class feature tied to skill dice.
- Instead of gaining maneuvers, rogues now have access to special skill tricks.
- Rogue Schemes have been updated to have a greater impact on the rogue.
- Uncanny Dodge and Evasion are new class features adapted from maneuvers.

Wizard

- The wizard's spellcasting has undergone significant changes.
- The Wizard Spells per Day table has been updated.
- The wizard has new guidelines for casting rituals.
- Tradition of Wizardry has been revised to provide more varied class features and cantrip options. In addition, the signature spell ability has been removed.

Spells

Cantrips: Cantrips (formerly called 0-level spells) can be cast at will once more.

Expanded Levels: Spells have been expanded to support characters of levels 1–20.

Additions and Revisions: Some spells have been added and many have been revised.

Spells Cast at Higher Levels: Many spells now deal extra damage when cast using higher level spell slots.

Rituals: The gp cost of casting most rituals has been eliminated.

Maneuvers

Revised List: The maneuver choices have been revised based on the changes to both the fighter and the rogue. Some maneuvers have become skill tricks for the rogue.

Gameplay Improvements: Many maneuvers have been revised to improve gameplay.

Specialties and Feats

Presentation: The presentation has been altered; feat descriptions are now presented separately from specialties, and most of the specialties have new names.

Additions: Various specialties and feats have been added to the playtest

Benefit Revisions: Many feats have revised benefits.

Equipment

Weapon Categories: Finesse is now a weapon property instead of a category. Heavy is now a property instead of a weapon category. A new category, special weapons, has been added.

Revised Weapons and Armor: Many weapons have been revised to take advantage of the expanded weapon properties system. Some armors have been modified with new names and traits to increase armor diversity.

Additions and Deletions: Weapons, armor, and other equipment have been added, with some deletions.

DM Guidelines

Combat Encounter Guidelines: XP values to determine combat encounter difficulty have been adjusted.

DCs: The sample DCs for checks have been updated.

Bestiary

Additions: Dozens of monsters have been added in support of higher-level play.

Monster Math: Many of the monsters have had their statistics adjusted, including ability scores, damage, hit points, level, and XP.

Traits and Actions: The text for some monster actions and monster traits has been revised.

Known Issues

- The DCs in the *Caves of Chaos*, *Isle of Dread*, and *Reclaiming Blingdenstone* adventures do not reflect those currently in the DM Guidelines file.
- The character sheet might no longer reflect an optimal presentation for the available character options.