

ZOMBIEPOCALYPSE

by Mike Berkey (michael.berkey@gmail.com), Copyright 2008. For more Microlite20 awesomeness, head over to the Microlite20 website at <http://www.microlite20.net>.

This game is based on SpyLite, although MicroModern will work just as well. For more ideas on how to tweak the system to fit that zombie movie feel, see below under “Dials”.

Dials

Default SpyLite is based on the assumption that even first level characters are awesome. Characters should be knife-fighting Nazi spies on the top of a speeding train, sniping foes while hanging upside down from a helicopter in the dead of night during the worst storm of the season...this is SpyLite's default power level...and it's not necessarily very gritty. It's great for a *Resident Evil*-type game, not so much for *Dawn of the Dead*.

This is why ZombiePocalypse has “Dials”. **Enable any or all of the following Dials to tone down the players' capabilities.** Or just use MicroModern as the base rule set instead (or do both):

Fear. Fear is the players' worst foe. In any situation where the players are suddenly confronted with zombies or the supernatural, make a **Fright Check**. Use Int or Str + Phys vs a DC equal to twice the strongest monster's hit Dice plus 10. Add +1d6 to the DC if the monster is part of a group, or +2d6 if the monster is part of a very big group.

The penalty for failing a Fright Check varies depending on how badly the roll went. Effects can range from -4 to hit and skill rolls at the low end all the way up to running away, completely melting down, or even tossing your cookies. Effects will typically last 1d6 rounds or more.

Gearless. Sometimes the players are not part of an Agency. In this scenario, they do not have gear points. Whatever gear they have is limited to what they would reasonably have on them at the start of the adventure or find during their explorations. Talents dealing with gear are not available.

Gritty. HP is calculated by rolling 1d6+Str mods per level instead of the usual MicroLite way.

Gore-Fest. Any hit that does more damage than half the target's total HP sprays everything nearby with blood, bits of bone, and internal organs. Critical hits do maximum damage PLUS the rolled amount. Any attack that does a significant amount of damage (GM's

call) may have additional game effects, such as slowing movement, skill penalties, bleeding, or occasional bouts of unconsciousness.

Unremarkable. The players do not have access to Talents and Action Points may only be used to heal.

Zombies

Zombies come in a variety of flavors. Before adding them into your adventure, you should consider their motivations: Are they after brains? Do they eat flesh? Do they exist to spread the zombie plague? Are they under the control of some agency, such as a wizard or government research agency? Or are they just freak mutants, created by a toxic waste spill?

You also need to decide how fast your zombies move. Shambling zombies are less dangerous than the running variety.

Animated Body Parts. Usually the result of a dismembered zombie refusing to die, most animated body parts have no effective attacks. The entry below is for an animated arm or hand.

Animated Parts. HD 1d6 (3 HP), AC 14, Grab +0 (Str 8) or by weapon -2 if they can hold one.

Zombie, Acid-spitters. This is a template for a zombie capable of spitting acid or poison. Simply add a ranged attack that does 2d6 acid damage. This attack counts as a “bite” attack if the zombie plague is being used (see below).

Zombie, Dog. *HD 2d12+6 (20 HP), AC 12, Bite +3 (1d6+4).*

Zombie, Giant Crocodile. *HD 7d12+49 (95 HP), AC 18, Bite +14 (1d10+10) or Tail Slap +14 (3d6+10).*

Zombie, Gooley. A less resilient version of the normal zombie, suitable for use in shambling hordes.

Zombie, Gooley. HD 1d12+1 (7 HP), AC 10, Slam +0 (1d6+1) or Grab +0 (Str 12). Grab is then followed by Bite +0 (1d6+1).

Zombie, Hulk. Unstoppable, huge and single-minded, this zombie is a tank. For larger versions, add more HD and DR. In the movies, these types of zombies tend to be the result of military experimentation and are usually heavily armed and armored.

Zombie, Hulk. HD 6d12+30 (69 HP), AC 14, Slam +11 (1d6+5) or Grab +11 (Str 20), DR 3.

Zombie, Raven. Avian scavengers feeding on the undead tend to become infected with the disease themselves.

Zombie, Raven. HD ¼ (2 HP), AC 14, Peck or Claw +4 (1d6-4) or Flutter. If a Peck hits by more than 5 points over the target's AC, the target is blinded for 1d6 rounds. Special Attack: Flutter. Victim takes -1 to AC and to-hit while the raven is using this attack.

Zombie, Raven (Flock). Each flock consists of 2d6 ravens and will attack one target at a time. A swarm of ravens can consist of multiple flocks—in this situation, a “flock” is simply a swarm of multiple birds that attack the same target. Flocks take half-damage from non-flame based weapons and disperse when their HP are exceeded.

Zombie, Raven (Flock). HD 3d12 (19 HP), AC 16. A flock will have 1d3 birds Fluttering each round (for -1d3 to hit and AC per round while the flock is attacking) and will Peck and Claw for +6 (1d6-4) each (making two attack rolls on a given target per round).

Zombie, Regenerating. Treat as another type of zombie, but 1d6 rounds after they're put down, they regenerate and get back up. Body parts slide towards each other, wounds stitch themselves shut. Killing one of these permanently requires special measures, such as complete immolation, encasing in cement and so on.

Zombie, Standard. Your typical off-the-shelf shambling, decomposing horror.

Zombie, Standard. HD 2d12+3 (16 HP), AC 11, Slam +1 (1d6+1) or Grab +1 (Str 12). Grab is then followed by Bite +1 (1d6+1).

Zombie Plague. Not technically a monster, this is an optional effect. If your zombies spread themselves through disease, then zombie bites are toxic. Any character bitten by a zombie must pass a Str + Phys save vs DC 15+the amount of damage or they will become a zombie within 1d10 hours.

If taken below 1/4 HP or killed, this save will be at +5 difficulty and the time to become a zombie goes down to several minutes.

Zombie Hordes

Zombies make excellent candidates for the Combat Scale rules. Instead of fighting a zombie horde directly, players are encouraged to find ways to blockade the horde or split them up into more manageable groups.

Mass Grapple. A common tactic of zombie hordes is the mass grapple. Treat it as a normal grapple, except the larger group gets a bonus to hit equal to twice the difference in their Combat Scales. The larger group also gets the same bonus as a bonus to their effective strength in maintaining a grapple.

A horde cannot be grappled except by another horde.

Threat Level

Zombies, at least in most films, are an environmental hazard that the characters must navigate on their way to achieving a goal. The adventure might be about finding safety, looking for a vital object, rescuing someone...the zombies are an obstacle along the way.

Adventure locations have a Threat Level, the chance every minute during a given scene that one or more zombies are going to come bashing in the doors or crash out of a bit of scenery. It's a number out of 10 and usually doesn't go higher than 5.

Keep it low during the initial parts of the adventure—say at 0-2--and then slowly raise it as things heat up.

The players can also lower the Threat Level by doing something really cool or killing the zombies in a particularly gory or effective way. Doing stupid things (i.e. splitting up, going into the basement) raises it.

Actors

Bartender. Face-2. Str 10 (+0), Dex 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Cha 12 (+1). HP 7. AC 11. Club +2 (1d6) or by Shotgun +2 (2d8). Physical +2, Subterfuge +2, Communications +5, Knowledge +2, Science +2.

Cheerleader. Face-1. Str 8 (-1), Dex 12 (+1), Int 10 (+0), Cha 12 (+1). HP 3. AC 11. Punch +0 (1d4-1) or Grab +0 or by improvised melee weapon +0. Physical +1, Subterfuge +1, Communications +4, Knowledge +1, Science +1.

Farmer, Elder. Spy-4. Str 14 (+2), Dex 10 (+0), Int 12 (+1), Cha 8 (-1). HP 22. AC 12. Punch +6 (1d4+2) or Shotgun +4 (2d8). Physical +7, Subterfuge +2, Communications +2, Knowledge +2, Science +7.

Farmer, Young. Spy-1. Str 16 (+3), Dex 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Cha 8 (-1). HP 6. AC 10. Punch +4 (1d4+3) or Shotgun +1 (2d8). Physical +1, Subterfuge +1, Communications +4, Knowledge +1, Science +4.

Jock. Soldier-1. Str 14 (+2), Dex 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Cha 8 (-1). HP 6. AC 10. Punch +4 (1d4+3) or Grab +4 or by improvised melee weapon +4. Physical +4, Subterfuge +1, Communications +1, Knowledge +1, Science +1.

Kid. Level-0. Str 6 (-2), Dex 12 (+1), Int 10 (+0), Cha 12 (+1). HP 2. AC 11. Punch -2 (1d4-2) or Grab -2 or by improvised melee weapon -2. One skill at +1, all other skills at +0.

Mad Scientist. Thinker-5. Str 10 (-0), Dex 8 (-1), Int 16 (+3), Cha 10 (+0). HP 18. AC 11. Punch +5 (1d4) or Grab +5 or Syringe +5 (save vs DC 20 or be knocked out). Physical +3, Subterfuge +3, Communications +3, Knowledge +8, Science +3.

Nerd. Thinker-1. Str 8 (-1), Dex 8 (-1), Int 14 (+2), Cha 8 (-1). HP 3. AC 9. Punch +0 (1d4-1) or Grab +0. Physical +1, Subterfuge +1, Communications +1, Knowledge +4, Science +1.

Riot Police. Soldier-2. Str 14 (+2), Dex 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Cha 10 (+0). HP 11. AC 11 (15 with riot shield). Shotgun +3 (2d8+1) or Hand-to-Hand +5 (1d4+3). Physical +5, Subterfuge +2, Communications +2, Knowledge +2, Science +2. Has body armor (2 charges, +4 to save).

Security Guard. Soldier-1. Str 12 (+1), Dex 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Cha 10 (+0). HP 5. AC 10. Nightstick +3 (1d6+2) or Pistol +2 (2d6+1). Physical +4, Subterfuge +1, Communications +1, Knowledge +1, Science +1.

Standard Issue College Student. Level 0. Str 10 (+0), Dex 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Cha 10 (+0). HP 3. AC 10. Punch +0 (1d4) or Grab +0 or Improvised Blunt Weapon +0 (1d6). One skill at +2, all other skills at +1.

Improvised Weapons

Characters in zombie movies tend to make more use of items laying around them, partly out of necessity, and partly out of entertainment value.

Blunt improvised weapons are treated as per Spylite—if a blunt improvised weapon not specifically designed to hit things does maximum damage, it breaks.

Impaling. Sharp weapons will not usually break if used properly, but may embed themselves in their target. A DC 10 Str + Phys check is required to remove the weapon, but it does an additional half damage on the way out. It's the GM's call whether or not a given sharp weapon will act in this way and what constitutes an impaling hit.

Weapons List

Baseball/Cricket Bat, 1d8 damage.

Boat Hook, 1d8 damage.

Chainsaw, does 1d6 damage if not turned on (with a chance of breaking), but will do 2d8 damage if turned on (no chance of breaking). Chainsaws are at -4 to hit when turned on.

On a solid hit, you have the option of deliberately leaving the chainsaw in your victim, doing 1d8 damage per round. The victim can make a Str + Phys check vs the attacker's Str + Phys to throw the chainsaw off. At the GM's option, a running chainsaw may get stuck in an opponent if a high enough damage roll is made (treat as an impale).

Chair, 1d6.

Crowbar, 1d8.

Garden Gnome, 1d6.

Garden Weasel, 1d6.

Golf Club, 1d6.

Lawnmower, 1d8 if not turned on, 2d10 if turned on. -6 to hit if turned on.

Pitch Fork, 1d8. Impales if attack roll beats required number by 5 or more.

Power Drill, 1d8 damage, plus additional effects as per Chainsaw (1d4 continuing damage).

Power Saw, 2d6 damage, plus additional effects as per Chainsaw (1d6 continuing damage), -2 to hit.

Pruning Sheers, 1d6. If closed on a limb, 1d10.

Scissors, 1d6.

Shovel, 1d8.