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INTRODUCTION

The old woman paid in silver, dried fish, and a promise.
The silver was real.
The fish smelled questionable.
The promise was probably worthless.
Still, it was more than Jorren had yesterday.
"The dead have returned," she said.
"The dead always return," replied Kazza.
She adjusted the spear across her shoulders and looked toward the distant hill.
The hill stood alone beyond the village fields.
An ugly thing.
Too round to be natural.
Too old to belong to anyone living.
A tomb.
Jorren sighed.
"Skeletons?"
"Probably."
"Ghouls?"
"Maybe."
"Cultists?"
"Hopefully."
Kazza raised an eyebrow.
"You hope it's cultists?"
"Cultists carry valuables."
The old woman glared at both of them.
"The Lady Elra has awakened."
Neither adventurer seemed particularly impressed.
Every village had a haunted hill.
Every ruin had a curse.
Every old tomb contained some ancient evil waiting to return.
Most of them were disappointments.
A few were memorable.
The memorable ones usually tried to eat you.
The pair climbed the hill before sunset.
Broken stones emerged from the grass.
Ancient carvings peeked through roots and moss.
The entrance stood open.
A black doorway leading underground.

The old woman hadn't mentioned that part.
"That's unusual," said Kazza.
"Maybe the dead opened it for us."
"Helpful."
"Very."
Jorren lit a lantern.
The yellow glow spilled into darkness.
Cold air drifted outward carrying the smell of old earth and
older death.
The two adventurers exchanged a glance.
No speech was necessary.
They had done this before.
Not here.
Not together.
Not even in the same kingdom.
But every ruin feels familiar eventually.
One step inside.
Then another.
Then the darkness swallowed them.
Far below the hill something moved.
Something ancient.
Something beautiful.
Something hungry.
And somewhere, in another world entirely, a scavenger
opened a rusted vault.
A starship captain received a distress signal.
A bronze-age prince marched to war.
A band of musicians argued about money.
A detective followed a trail through neon-lit streets.
A witch entered a haunted forest.
Different worlds.
Different stories.
Same trouble.
That is DAMN!
Some adventures happen in forgotten tombs.
Others happen aboard spaceships, inside ancient cities,
on battlefields, in haunted swamps, beneath alien suns, or
halfway through a disastrous concert tour.
Each issue of DAMN! explores a different world.
One month you may be hunting undead beneath a ruined
hill.

The next you might be touring with a soft-rock band in 1978. After that, investigating murders in a cyberpunk megacity, surviving a grimdark warzone, exploring a bronze-age metropolis powered by vinegar batteries, or crossing a wasteland in a jury-rigged war rig.

The worlds change.

The rules stay the same.

Heroes explore dangerous places.

They discover strange things.

They make terrible decisions.

Then they deal with the consequences.

Welcome to DAMN!

CH 1: WHAT IS DAMN!?

DAMN! is a roleplaying game, skirmish game, and wargame built around four simple Attributes: Damage, Armor, Movement, and Notoriety.

The same rules are used whether you are:

- Exploring a haunted tomb.
- Hunting monsters in a swamp.
- Leading a caravan through dangerous territory.
- Defending a village.
- Fighting a battle.
- Raiding a fortress.
- Commanding an army.

If something has DAMN! statistics, it can be played.

Heroes.

Monsters.

Animals.

Undead.

Vehicles.

Ancient machines.

Entire armies.

The rules stay the same.

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

In a roleplaying game, each player controls a character.

That character becomes their eyes and ears in the world.

The player decides:

- Where they go.
- What they say.
- What they attempt.
- What risks they take.

The Guide describes the world around them.

The Guide controls:

- Villagers
- Monsters
- Enemies
- Weather
- Traps
- Strange discoveries
- Everything else

Together, everyone discovers what happens.

No one—not even the Guide—knows exactly how the story will end.

WHAT IS A SKIRMISH GAME?

A skirmish is a small battle.

Instead of controlling one hero, a player may control several characters.

Examples

- A band of raiders
- A patrol of soldiers
- A caravan guard force
- A gang of scavengers
- A hunting party

Most skirmishes involve:

5–20 models per side.

Skirmishes focus on:

- Positioning
- Objectives
- Terrain
- Resource management

Winning is often more important than simply killing the enemy.

WHAT IS A WARGAME?

A wargame uses the same rules at a larger scale.

Players command:

- Warbands
- Armies
- Settlements
- Convoys
- Military forces

A hero that survives several adventures may eventually command an army.

An army may discover a ruin.

The survivors of that battle may become the heroes of the next adventure.

Everything connects.

THE WORLD OF DAMN!

The default DAMN! setting exists somewhere between a fallen age and a new age.
Ancient kingdoms have collapsed.
Roads are broken.
Cities lie abandoned.
Knowledge has been lost.
The world is rebuilding itself.
In some places that means villages and farms.
In others it means tribes, warlords, city-states, caravans, and frontier settlements.
People survive among the ruins of older civilizations.
Some ruins contain treasure.
Others contain monsters.
Many contain both.

A GAME OF MANY WORLDS

The core rules assume a world of:

- Ancient ruins
- Bronze weapons
- Monsters
- Magic
- Strange relics
- Dangerous wilderness

But DAMN! is not tied to a single setting.
Different issues of DAMN! explore different worlds.

Examples

Velmara

- Forgotten cities.
- Ancient gods.
- Treasure hunters.
- Monsters.

The Ballad of Lady Grave Harrow

- Haunted villages.
- Undead nobles.
- Dark forests.
- Curses.

Bronzepunk

- Bronze-age city-states.

- Signal towers.
- Strange science.
- Ancient mysteries.

War Bands & War-Rigs

- Ruined highways.
- Scavengers.
- Mutants.
- Warlords.

CyberDAMN!

- Megacities.
- Megahackers.
- Megacorporations.
- MegaAI.

Future Retro DAMN!

- Rocket ships.
- Solar empires.
- Lost worlds.
- Strange technologies.

KDMN FM!

- Tour buses.
- Concert halls.
- Record deals.
- Questionable decisions.

The setting changes.

The rules do not.

WHAT DO HEROES DO?

Heroes solve problems.

Usually dangerous problems.

Sometimes they are paid.

Sometimes they volunteer.

Sometimes they create the problem themselves.

Typical adventures involve:

- Exploration
- Investigation
- Survival
- Negotiation

- Combat
- Discovery

A group may spend an entire session exploring a ruin without drawing a weapon.

Another session may involve a battle against fifty raiders.

Both are equally valid DAMN! adventures.

WHAT DO GUIDES DO?

The Guide(Referee, GM or Game Master) describes the world.

The Guide controls everyone and everything that is not a player character.

The Guide's job is not to defeat the players.

The Guide's job is to create interesting situations.

A good Guide asks:

"What happens next?"

instead of:

"How do I beat the players?"

The dice decide the rest.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

Each player needs:

- A Character Sheet
- A Pencil
- Several six-sided dice

The Guide needs:

- This book
- Dice
- Paper for notes
- An adventure

Optional:

- Miniatures
- Maps
- Terrain
- Tokens
- Snacks

DAMN! works perfectly well with:

- Coins
- Buttons
- Pebbles
- Scraps of paper

Expensive miniatures are not required.

Good ideas are usually more useful.

HOW A TYPICAL SESSION WORKS

A DAMN! session usually follows a simple pattern:

Step 1: A Problem Appears

A village needs help.

A ruin is discovered.

Someone goes missing.

A monster attacks.

A war begins.

Step 2: The Heroes Investigate

Gather information.

Ask questions.

Make plans.

Acquire supplies.

Step 3: The Heroes Take Action

Travel.

Explore.

Fight.

Negotiate.

Sneak.

Survive.

Step 4: Things Go Wrong

This is the most important step.

Plans fail.

Unexpected dangers appear.

Someone makes a terrible decision.

The story becomes interesting.

Step 5: Consequences

The heroes succeed.

The heroes fail.

The heroes barely survive.

The world changes.

Then a new problem appears.

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE

If a rule slows the game down, make a decision and keep playing.

DAMN! is a game about action, exploration, discovery, and adventure.

The goal is not to perfectly simulate reality.

The goal is to find out what happens next.

Now that you know what DAMN! is, it's time to learn how the game actually works.

CH 2: HOW STRONG ARE ATTRIBUTES?

The numbers in DAMN! are intentionally small.

Most people are not heroes.

Most people are farmers, laborers, merchants, fishers, shepherds, hunters, and craftspeople trying to survive another season.

A score of 2 is noticeably above average.

A score of 3 is impressive.

A score of 5 is exceptional.

A score of 8 is terrifying.

A score of 10 is the sort of thing stories get written about.

When in doubt, use smaller numbers.

ORDINARY PEOPLE

Most people have:

D1 A1 M1 N1

These are ordinary adults.

They work.

They travel.

They have families.

They can defend themselves if forced.

They are not adventurers.

Farmer

A person who spends their days planting crops, repairing fences, and hoping the weather cooperates.

D2 A1 M1 N1 HP 2 MP 2

Equipment: Work Knife (+1 Damage Die)

Traits: None

Most farmers would rather avoid a fight.

Potter

A skilled craftsperson who makes jars, bowls, and storage vessels.

D1 A1 M2 N1 HP 2 MP 2

Equipment: Kiln Tools

Work Knife (+1 Damage Die)

Traits: None

A potter is valuable to a village but not especially dangerous.

Merchant

A trader who survives by knowing people rather than fighting them.

D1 A1 M1 N2 HP 4 MP 4

Equipment:

Dagger (+1 Damage Die)

Pack Mule

Trade Goods

Traits: Alert

The merchant knows where to find information, supplies, and trouble.

HEALTHY PEOPLE

Healthy and capable people usually possess a few 2s. These are the people most villages rely on when something needs doing.

Hunter

A provider of meat, hides, and stories.

D2 A1 M2 N1 HP 2 MP 2

Equipment: Bow (+2 Damage Dice)

Knife (+1 Damage Die)

Traits: Tracker

The hunter spends more time in the wilderness than most people.

Caravan Driver

Responsible for moving goods safely between settlements.

D1 A2 M2 N2 HP 4 MP 4

Equipment: Club (+1 Damage Die)

Wagon

Pack Animals

Traits: Alert

The driver survives through caution rather than bravery.

Village Guard

Not a soldier. Just the person expected to stand between trouble and everyone else.

D2 A2 M1 N1 HP 2 MP 2

Equipment: Spear (+2 Damage Dice)

Shield (+1 Armor Die)

Leather Armor (+1 Armor Die)

Traits:

Brave

The guard is often the toughest person in town.

WARRIORS AND ATHLETES

These people train regularly.

They possess experience, discipline, or exceptional natural talent.

Most common folk know better than to challenge them.

Veteran Guard

A professional warrior.

D3 A3 M2 N2 HP 4 MP 4

Equipment: Sword (+2 Damage Dice)

Shield (+1 Armor Die)

Mail Shirt (+2 Armor Dice)

Traits: Brave

Strong

The veteran has survived enough battles to become dangerous.

Arena Fighter

A warrior who earns a living through violence.

D3 A2 M3 N2 HP 4 MP 4

Equipment: Great Axe (+3 Damage Dice)

Leather Armor (+1 Armor Die)

Traits: Strong

Tough

The arena fighter hits hard and moves fast.

Scout

A messenger, tracker, and explorer.

D2 A2 M3 N3 HP 6 MP 6

Equipment:

Bow (+2 Damage Dice)

Knife (+1 Damage Die)

Leather Armor (+1 Armor Die)

Traits: Tracker

Alert

Fast

A scout survives by avoiding fair fights.

HEROES

Player characters usually begin here.

They are not superheroes.

They are simply people willing to take risks most others avoid.

Adventurer

D3 A3 M3 N3 HP 6 MP 6

Equipment: Sword (+2 Damage Dice)

Shield (+1 Armor Die)

Mail Shirt (+2 Armor Dice)

Traits: Brave

Strong

A capable all-around hero.

Priest

D2 A2 M2 N5 HP 10 MP 10

Equipment:

Staff (+1 Damage Die)

Holy Symbol

Traits: Sorcerer

Healer

Spells: Heal

Ward

Holy Light

The priest wins battles through faith and miracles rather than muscle.

Tomb Raider

D2 A3 M4 N4 HP 8 MP 8

Equipment: Short Sword (+2 Damage Dice)

Leather Armor (+1 Armor Die)

Rope

Lantern

Lock Picks

Traits: Alert

Lucky

Survivor

The tomb raider survives by preparation and good judgment. Hopefully.

ELITES

These people are known by name.

Stories follow them wherever they go.

Kings hire them.

Warlords fear them.

Villagers tell stories about them.

Champion

D5 A4 M3 N4 HP 8 MP 8

Equipment: Great Sword (+3 Damage Dice)

Plate Armor (+3 Armor Dice)

Shield (+1 Armor Die)

Traits: Brave

Strong

Tough

The sort of warrior who changes the outcome of battles.

High Priest

D2 A3 M3 N5 HP 10 MP 10

Equipment: Ceremonial Staff (+1 Damage Die)

Sacred Relics

Traits: Sorcerer

Leader

Healer

A spiritual authority with real power.

Warlord

D4 A4 M4 N5 HP 10 MP 10

Equipment: Sword (+2 Damage Dice)

Shield (+1 Armor Die)

Plate Armor (+3 Armor Dice)

Traits: Leader

Brave

Strong

A warlord is dangerous because others follow them.

Master Thief

D3 A3 M5 N4 HP 8 MP 8

Equipment: Daggers (+1 Damage Die)

Lock Picks

Climbing Gear

Traits: Alert

Fast

Lucky

A master thief rarely fights fair.

ELRA, DEATH SORCERESS

Elra is not an ordinary villain.

She is the final challenge of the introductory adventure.

D3 A4 M3 N10 HP 20 MP 20

Equipment:

Black Ritual Dagger (+1 Damage Die)

Death Goddess Relics

Traits: Sorcerer

Leader

Undead

Spells: Death Bolt

Soul Drain

Command Dead

Raise Dead

Most heroes should never meet someone with N10.

If they do, something important is about to happen.

Or go very wrong.

CH 3: ROLLING DICE

Now that you know what the four Attributes mean, it's time to learn how the game is actually played.

Almost everything in DAMN! comes down to a simple process:

1. Determine which Attribute applies.
2. Roll that many six-sided dice.
3. Count successes.
4. Compare the result to a Difficulty or another roll.
5. Describe what happens.

That's it.

The same system is used for:

- Combat
- Climbing
- Magic
- Investigation
- Leadership
- Survival
- Chases
- Repairing equipment
- Ancient relics
- Negotiation
- Building things

Once you understand rolling dice, you understand most of DAMN!.

SUCCESSFUL ROLLS

Whenever a character attempts something difficult, roll a number of dice equal to the relevant Attribute.

Every:

5 or 6 = Success

Count the total number of successes.

The more successes you roll, the better the outcome.

Example

Brenna attempts to force open a rotting wooden door.

The Guide decides this uses Damage.

Brenna has: Damage 3

She rolls: 6, 5, 2

Result: 2 Successes

The door opens.

CHOOSING AN ATTRIBUTE

The Guide decides which Attribute applies.

Most actions fit naturally into one of the four Attributes.

Damage Rolls

Use Damage for:

- Attacking
- Grappling
- Breaking things
- Lifting objects
- Intimidating through force

Example:

Breaking chains.

Armor Rolls

Use Armor for:

- Resisting poison
- Enduring disease
- Surviving hazards
- Resisting physical punishment

Example: Surviving a tunnel collapse.

Movement Rolls

Use Movement for:

- Climbing
- Running
- Swimming
- Jumping
- Dodging

Example: Crossing a collapsing bridge.

Notoriety Rolls

Use Notoriety for:

- Magic
- Investigation
- Leadership
- Religion
- Lore
- Negotiation
- Repair work

- Relics

Example: Deciphering an ancient inscription.

DIFFICULTY

When no one is actively opposing the character, the Guide assigns a Difficulty.

The player must equal or exceed the required number of successes.

Successes	Difficulty
1	Easy
2	Standard
3	Difficult
4	Hard
5	Heroic

EASY TASKS

Easy tasks require:

1 Success

Examples

- Climbing a fence
- Finding a campsite
- Spotting smoke on the horizon
- Swimming a calm stream

Failure may still have consequences.

STANDARD TASKS

Standard tasks require:

2 Successes

Examples

- Tracking someone through the woods
- Repairing damaged equipment
- Convincing a suspicious merchant
- Crossing unstable ruins

Most DAMN! rolls fall into this category.

DIFFICULT TASKS

Difficult tasks require:

3 Successes

Examples

- Climbing a cliff
- Translating an ancient language
- Navigating a swamp at night
- Repairing a damaged relic

HARD TASKS

Hard tasks require:

4 Successes

Examples:

- Surviving a collapsing tower
- Convincing a hostile warlord
- Deactivating a dangerous artifact

These tasks are risky even for heroes.

HEROIC TASKS

Heroic tasks require:

5 Successes

Examples

- Slaying a legendary monster alone
- Closing a portal to another world
- Holding a bridge against an army

These become stories people tell later.

OPPOSED ROLLS

Sometimes someone is actively resisting.

In these situations both sides roll.

The side with the most successes wins.

Example

Brenna attacks a Skeleton.

Brenna rolls Damage.

The Skeleton rolls Armor.

Whoever has more successes wins.

Example

Kazza attempts to sneak past a guard.

Kazza rolls Movement.

The guard rolls Notoriety.

If Kazza scores more successes, he slips past unnoticed.

TIES

If both sides roll the same number of successes:

The situation remains unresolved.

Examples

- A door remains stuck.
- Neither wrestler gains advantage.
- A negotiation stalls.
- Both combatants remain locked in combat.

The Guide may ask for another roll or describe the situation.

HELPING

Characters often work together.

When assisting another character:

The helper rolls the same Attribute.

If they score at least 1 Success:

The acting character gains: +1 Die

Maximum: +3 Bonus Dice

No matter how many helpers are involved.

Example

Doruk attempts to force open a stone door.

Brenna helps.

Brenna rolls Damage.

She scores 1 Success.

Doruk gains: +1 Damage Die

for his attempt.

GROUP ACTIONS

Sometimes the entire group attempts the same task.

Examples

- Crossing a river
- Climbing a cliff

- Searching a ruin

The Guide may require: Everyone rolls individually.
or

One leader rolls with assistance from the group.

Choose whichever keeps the game moving.

CRITICAL SUCCESSES

Sometimes things go exceptionally well.

A Critical Success occurs when: Half or more of the dice rolled show 6.

Example

Nara rolls: 6, 6, 6, 2

Three of four dice show 6.

Critical Success.

The action succeeds and something extra happens.

Examples

- Extra information
- Faster completion
- Bonus treasure
- Additional damage
- Improved position

The Guide decides the exact benefit.

CRITICAL FAILURES

Sometimes things go very badly.

A Critical Failure occurs when:

No successes are rolled

and

More 1s appear than any other number.

Example

Doruk rolls: 1, 1, 2, 3

No successes.

Two 1s.

Critical Failure.

Something goes wrong.

Examples

- A lockpick breaks.
- A weapon is dropped.
- A rope snaps.
- A monster hears the noise.
- The floor collapses.

Failure should make the story more interesting.
Not stop it.

MAGIC ROLLS

Most spells require:

1. Spending MP.
2. Rolling Notoriety.

The spell description tells you the Difficulty.

Example

Nara casts Heal.

Cost: 2 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Nara has: Notoriety 6

She rolls 6 dice.

If she scores at least 1 Success: The spell works.

RELIC ROLLS

Ancient relics often function like spells.

They require:

- MP
- A Notoriety roll

Some relics may be damaged, unstable, or cursed.

The Guide should never be afraid to make relics strange.

WHEN NOT TO ROLL

Do not roll if failure would be boring.

Do not roll if success is obvious.

Do not roll if there is no meaningful consequence.

Examples

No roll required:

- Walking across a room
- Eating a meal
- Lighting a torch

- Opening an unlocked door
- Rolls exist to answer interesting questions.
If the answer is obvious, keep playing.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Guide: "The stone door is cracked and partially buried beneath rubble."

Doruk: "I want to search for another entrance."

Guide: "Roll Notoriety."

Doruk has N4.

He rolls: 6, 5, 3, 2

2 Successes.

Guide: "You discover a narrow crack hidden behind vines. It looks large enough for one person to squeeze through."

Brenna: "I'll go first."

Guide: "That will require a Movement roll."

And the adventure continues.

THE IMPORTANT PART

The Guide describes a situation.

The players decide what to do.

The dice decide whether it works.

Then everyone discovers what happens next.

That is the heart of DAMN!.

In the next chapter you'll learn how combat works, how people die, and why opening ancient tombs is usually a bad idea.

CH 4: COMBAT

Eventually someone decides talking is no longer working.
When that happens, DAMN! uses combat.

Combat is intentionally simple.

The goal is not to simulate every swing, dodge, parry, and footstep.

The goal is to find out who wins, who survives, and what gets broken along the way.

Combat should be dangerous.

A lucky farmer with a spear can still kill a hero.

A hero who charges into every fight eventually becomes a cautionary tale.

COMBAT ROUND

Combat is divided into rounds.

During a round every character gets a turn.

Once everyone has acted, a new round begins.

TURN ORDER

Characters act in order of Movement.

Highest Movement goes first.

Lowest Movement goes last.

Example

Kazza: M5

Doruk: M4

Brenna: M3

Skeleton: M2

The order is:

1. Kazza
2. Doruk
3. Brenna
4. Skeleton

TIES

If two characters have the same Movement:

Highest Notoriety acts first.

If still tied: Roll off.

WHAT CAN I DO ON MY TURN?

During your turn you may:

- Move
- Attack
- Cast a Spell
- Use an Item
- Search
- Reload
- Interact with the environment
- Help another character

The Guide should allow reasonable actions.
If a player has a good idea, let them try.

MOVEMENT

Characters move: Movement \times 2"
per turn.

Example

Brenna has: M3

She may move: 6"
during her turn.

VEHICLES AND MOUNTS

Vehicles and mounts move: Movement \times 3"
per turn.

Examples

Horse:

M4

Moves 12"

War Wagon:

M3

Moves 9"

Riding Lizard:

M5

Moves 15"

ATTACKING

To attack:

1. Choose a target.
2. Roll Damage.
3. Defender rolls Armor.
4. Compare successes.
5. Apply damage.

DAMAGE ROLL

Roll:

Damage

plus

Weapon Dice

Example

Brenna has:

D3

and a Sword.

Sword:

+2 Damage Dice

She rolls:

5 dice total.

DEFENSE ROLL

Roll:

Armor

plus

Armor Dice

plus

Shield Dice

Example

A guard has:

A2

Leather Armor:

+1 Armor Die

Shield:

+1 Armor Die

The guard rolls:

4 dice total.

DEALING DAMAGE

Damage dealt equals:

Attack Successes – Defense Successes

Minimum damage:

1 HP if the attacker wins.

Example

Brenna attacks.

5 dice.

Results:

6, 6, 5, 3, 1

3 Successes.

Skeleton defends.

2 dice.

Results:

5, 1

1 Success.

Brenna wins by:

2 Successes.

The Skeleton loses:

2 HP.

REACH

Some weapons keep enemies farther away.

Typical Reach:

Weapon	Reach
Knife	Adjacent
Club	Adjacent
Sword	Adjacent
Axe	Adjacent
Spear	2"
Pike	3"

A character using a longer weapon attacks first when charged.

RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged weapons use Damage just like melee weapons.
The only difference is distance.

Example Ranges

Weapon	Range
Throwing Knife	6"
Sling	12"
Bow	24"
Crossbow	18"
Flintlock Pistol	12"
Flintlock Musket	24"

COVER

Cover makes people harder to hit.

Light Cover:

+1 Armor Die

Examples:

- Bushes
- Low walls
- Fences

Heavy Cover:

+2 Armor Dice

Examples:

- Stone walls
- Large ruins
- Fortifications

SHOOTING INTO COMBAT

If allies and enemies are mixed together:

Missed shots may strike the wrong target.

The Guide decides who is hit.

This encourages careful shooting.

CHARGING

A character that moves directly into melee gains:

+1 Damage Die

for their first attack.

A charge must move at least half the character's normal movement.

AIMING

Instead of attacking immediately:

A character may spend their turn aiming.

Their next attack gains:

+1 Damage Die

This is especially useful for bows, muskets, and crossbows.

HELPING IN COMBAT

A nearby ally may assist.

Roll the appropriate Attribute.

If at least 1 Success is scored:

The acting character gains:

+1 Die

Maximum:

+3 Bonus Dice from assistance.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Combat is more than reducing HP.

Players should be encouraged to:

- Disarm
- Grapple
- Push
- Trip
- Blind
- Distract
- Knock down

The Guide assigns a Difficulty or uses Opposed Rolls.

GRAPPLING

Attacker:

Roll Damage.

Defender:

Roll Damage or Movement.

Winner controls the grapple.

A grappled target cannot freely move away.

SHOVING

Roll Damage.

Target rolls Damage or Armor.

If successful:

Push target 2".

Knocking someone into a pit is often more effective than stabbing them.

FALLING

Short falls:

1 HP

Dangerous falls:

2–4 HP

Huge falls:

Probably fatal.

The Guide decides.

FIRE

Fire is dangerous.

A burning creature gains: Burning Condition

At the start of each turn: Roll Armor.

Difficulty 1.

Failure: Lose 1 HP.

POISON

Poison usually causes: Poisoned Condition

Some particularly nasty poisons may also deal direct HP damage.

FEAR

Some monsters are horrifying.

When encountering terrifying creatures:

Roll Notoriety.

Typical Difficulty: 2 Successes

Failure: Terrified

Examples

- Undead Queens
- Ancient Monsters

- Demon Princes
- Things from Beyond Reality

DYING

When HP reaches 0: The character falls.

They are no longer able to act normally.

At the start of each round: Roll Notoriety.

Success: Still alive.

Still unconscious.

Still dying.

Failure: Dead.

HEALING THE DYING

An adjacent ally may attempt treatment.

Difficulty: 2 Notoriety Successes

Success: The dying character stops making death rolls.

They remain unconscious until healed.

RETREATING

Running away is a valid strategy.

Heroes who survive can return later.

Dead heroes rarely do.

EXAMPLE COMBAT

A Skeleton blocks a tomb doorway.

Brenna charges forward.

She gains: +1 Damage Die for charging.

Damage: 3

Sword: +2 Dice

Charge: +1 Die

Total: 6 Dice

Results: 6, 6, 5, 5, 2, 1

4 Successes.

Skeleton Armor: 2 Dice

Results: 5, 1

1 Success.

Damage: $4 - 1 = 3$

The Skeleton loses: 3 HP.

More than enough.

The ancient bones scatter across the floor.

WINNING A FIGHT

Victory is not always killing the enemy.

A fight may be won by:

- Escaping
- Capturing someone
- Holding a bridge
- Protecting a caravan
- Stealing an artifact
- Rescuing prisoners
- Destroying an altar

Always remember the objective.

The dead rarely care who won.

The living usually do.

THE IMPORTANT PART

Combat should be dangerous.

Monsters should be frightening.

Heroes should feel clever when they survive.

If every problem can be solved by charging forward, the

Guide is not using enough traps.

Next you'll learn about Conditions, Healing, Resting, and all the miserable ways adventurers slowly fall apart between fights.

CH: 5 CONDITIONS, HEALING, & SURVIVAL

Most heroes do not die because of a sword.
They die because of what happens afterward.

A deep wound.

An infection.

Exhaustion.

Poison.

Starvation.

A poor decision made three days ago.

Combat is only one danger among many.

A smart adventurer pays attention to conditions, supplies, and recovery.

A reckless adventurer eventually becomes a warning told around campfires.

WHAT ARE CONDITIONS?

Conditions represent temporary injuries, illnesses, emotional states, and other problems that affect a character.

Conditions can be caused by:

- Combat
- Monsters
- Magic
- Traps
- Poison
- Disease
- Environmental hazards
- Bad decisions

A character may suffer multiple conditions at once.

Conditions remain until removed.

BLEEDING

The character is losing blood.

This may be a deep cut, puncture wound, or other serious injury.

Effects

At the end of every round:

Lose 1 HP.

Removing Bleeding

A nearby character may spend an action treating the wound.

Roll Notoriety.

Difficulty 1.

Success: Bleeding ends.

A Short Rest also removes Bleeding.

Example

Brenna is struck by a jagged spear.

The Guide rules she gains Bleeding.

Three rounds later she has lost: 3 HP simply from blood loss.

BURNING

The character is on fire.

This condition is rarely subtle.

Effects

At the beginning of each turn: Roll Armor.

Difficulty 1.

Failure: Lose 1 HP.

Removing Burning

Spend an action:

- Rolling on the ground
- Jumping into water
- Smothering the flames

Success removes Burning.

Example

A cultist throws burning oil.

Kazza catches fire.

Until he puts the flames out, he continues risking damage every round.

POISONED

The character is suffering from poison, venom, contaminated food, or toxic chemicals.

Effects

Roll one fewer die when using:

- Damage
- Movement

Minimum: 1 die.

Removing Poisoned

A successful medical treatment, or a Long Rest, or an antidote.

Example

A giant swamp spider bites Doruk.

His Damage 3 becomes: 2 dice until the poison wears off.

DISEASED

Disease is slower than poison but often more dangerous.

Diseases may come from:

- Monsters
- Rotting corpses
- Bad water
- Ancient tombs
- Swamps

Effects

Recover only half normal HP.

Recover only half normal MP.

Round fractions down.

Removing Diseased

Medicine.

Several days of rest.

Certain spells.

The Guide determines the severity.

Example

Nara contracts Marsh Fever.

Instead of recovering 2 HP from treatment, she recovers only 1.

TERRIFIED

The character has encountered something truly horrifying.

Examples

- Powerful undead
- Demons
- Ancient monsters
- Cosmic horrors
- Certain spells

Fear should be rare.

Terror should be memorable.

Effects

The character may not willingly move toward the source of fear.

Removing Terrified

At the start of each turn: Roll Notoriety.

Difficulty 2.

Success: Terrified is removed.

Example

The first time the heroes meet Elra, the Guide may call for a Fear test.

Failure means the character cannot simply charge her.

EXHAUSTED

The character is tired, hungry, overworked, or physically drained.

Effects

Reduce Movement by 1.

Minimum: M1

Removing Exhausted

A Long Rest.

Food.

Water.

Sleep.

Example

After marching all day through a swamp, the party becomes Exhausted.

Everyone moves slower until they rest.

CURSED

Ancient ruins are full of things that should have been left alone.

Effects

Varies.

Examples

- -1 Damage
- -1 Armor
- -1 Movement
- -1 Notoriety

Some curses may be far worse.

Removing Curses

Usually requires:

- Magic
- Rituals
- Quests
- Relics

Rarely as simple as resting.

DEAD

Dead is a condition.

It is also usually permanent.

Effects

The character is dead.

This often limits future opportunities.

Removing Dead

This depends entirely on the setting.

Most DAMN! settings treat death seriously.

Some do not.

HEALING

Characters recover through:

- Rest
- Medicine
- Magic
- Time

SHORT REST

Requires:

10 minutes of relative safety.

No combat.

No immediate danger.

Benefits

Recover: 1 HP

1 MP

Remove: Bleeding

Example

After clearing a tomb chamber, the heroes stop to bandage wounds and catch their breath.

Everyone recovers: 1 HP and 1 MP

LONG REST

Requires: Approximately 8 hours.

Usually sleep.

Benefits

Recover: All HP

All MP

Remove:

- Bleeding
- Poisoned
- Exhausted

Some diseases may remain.

Most curses remain.

Example

The heroes return to town and spend the night recovering.

The next morning they are fully refreshed.

MEDICINE

Medicine allows characters to recover faster.

A healer, priest, herbalist, or physician may attempt treatment.

Treat Wounds

Roll Notoriety.

Difficulty 2.

Success: Target recovers 1 HP.

A character may only benefit from this treatment once per day.

Example

Nara treats Brenna after a fight.

She succeeds.

Brenna immediately recovers: 1 HP.

MAGIC AND HEALING

Many spells restore HP.

Unlike normal treatment: Magic may be used repeatedly.

The spell description determines:

- Cost
- Difficulty
- Effects

FOOD AND WATER

The Guide should decide how important supplies are.

For short adventures, supplies may be ignored.

For wilderness campaigns they become important.

A character without food, water, or shelter may become: Exhausted, Diseased or worse.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Not every enemy carries a weapon.

Many environments are deadly.

Examples

- Freezing weather
- Desert heat
- Swamps
- Radiation

- Toxic ruins
- Dangerous storms

Most hazards require:Armor rolls or Movement rolls to survive.

EXAMPLE HAZARD

The party attempts to cross a rotting rope bridge.

The Guide calls for: Movement Difficulty 2.

Kazza succeeds.

Doruk fails.

Doruk falls.

The Guide rules he loses: 2 HP and gains: Bleeding.

SURVIVING ADVENTURES

Most successful adventurers follow a few simple rules:

Bring extra food.

Bring rope.

Bring light.

Avoid unnecessary fights.

Rest when possible.

Never trust ancient magic.

Never trust ancient kings.

Never trust ancient priests.

And if someone says: "It will probably be fine."

Prepare for the worst.

THE IMPORTANT PART

Damage from combat is only one way to lose.

Poison, disease, exhaustion, fear, fire, hunger, and bad decisions are often more dangerous.

Heroes who survive learn to manage their resources.

Heroes who do not survive usually become part of the scenery. In the next chapter you'll learn about Traits—the special talents, training, gifts, and abilities that make heroes different from everyone else.

CH 6: TRAITS

Not everyone survives the world of DAMN! the same way. Some heroes are strong.

Some are clever. Some are lucky. Some are simply too stubborn to die.

Traits represent special talents, training, experience, gifts, mutations, blessings, curses, and unusual abilities.

Traits help make characters feel different even when they have similar Attributes.

A village guard and a caravan guard might have identical statistics. Their Traits tell you who they are.

BUYING TRAITS

Traits are purchased during character creation using Build Points (BP).

Most Traits cost: 2–3 BP

Unless a Trait specifically says otherwise, its effects are always active. A character may not purchase the same Trait more than once.

PHYSICAL TRAITS

These Traits represent strength, endurance, speed, and physical training.

Strong

Cost: 2 BP

You are exceptionally powerful.

Gain: +1 Damage Die whenever using Damage to:

- Lift
- Break
- Grapple
- Force open doors
- Perform feats of strength

Example

Brenna attempts to break a locked chest.

Her Damage is 3.

Because she is Strong she rolls: 4 Dice instead of 3.

Fast

Cost: 2 BP

Increase Movement by: +1

This permanently increases:

- Movement distance
- Initiative
- Chases
- Climbing
- Swimming

Example

M3 becomes: M4

Movement increases from: 6" to 8"

Tough

Cost: 2 BP

Gain: +2 HP

This bonus is added after calculating HP normally.

Example: N3 gives: 6 HP

Tough increases this to: 8 HP

Survivor

Cost: 2 BP

Roll: +1 Armor Die

against:

- Disease
- Poison
- Environmental hazards
- Weather
- Starvation

Example

A swamp disease requires an Armor roll.

A Survivor gains one additional die.

AWARENESS TRAITS

These Traits help characters notice danger.

Alert

Cost: 2 BP

Roll: +1 Die when

- Searching
- Detecting ambushes
- Spotting traps
- Finding hidden objects
- Looking for clues

Example:

Doruk searches a tomb.

His Notoriety is 4.

Alert allows him to roll:

5 Dice

instead of 4.

Tracker

Cost: 2 BP

Roll:

+1 Die

when:

- Tracking creatures
- Hunting
- Following trails
- Identifying tracks

Example:

Kazza follows wolf tracks through mud.

His Notoriety 3 becomes:

4 Dice

for the roll.

SOCIAL TRAITS

These Traits affect leadership and interaction.

Leader

Cost: 2 BP

Friendly characters within:

6"

gain:

+1 Die

when resisting:

- Fear
- Terror
- Intimidation

Leader does not affect the character who possesses it.

Famous

Cost: 2 BP

Roll:

+1 Die

when:

- Negotiating
- Commanding respect
- Calling upon your reputation

The Guide decides when your reputation helps.
Sometimes fame creates problems instead.

Lucky

Cost: 3 BP

Once per session: Reroll any Ones on a single roll.

You must keep the new result.

This may be used on:

- Attacks
- Defense rolls
- Skill rolls
- Death rolls
- Spell rolls

Example

Doruk fails a climbing roll.

He uses Lucky and re-rolls all Ones on their dice rolls.

The second result must be accepted.

COMBAT TRAITS

These Traits improve performance in battle.

Brave

Cost: 2 BP

Roll: +1 Die

when resisting:

- Fear
- Terror
- Mental domination

Example

Elra uses Beautiful Terror.

A Brave character gains one additional die on the resistance roll.

Undead Slayer
Cost: 3 BP
Gain: +1 Damage Die
when attacking Undead.

Examples

- Skeletons
- Zombies
- Ghosts
- Vampires
- Liches
- Elra

Monster Hunter
Cost: 3 BP
Gain: +1 Damage Die
against creatures with: D5 or higher
The creature must be obviously monstrous.

Examples

- Dragons
- Giants
- Swamp Beasts

Not humans.

HEALING TRAITS

Healer
Cost: 2 BP
Whenever you restore HP:
Restore: +1 additional HP

Example

A successful treatment would normally heal: 1 HP
A Healer restores: 2 HP

Physician
Cost: 3 BP
Gain:
+1 Die
when treating:

- Disease
- Poison
- Injuries

A Physician may attempt treatment twice per day instead of once.

MAGIC TRAITS

Some settings use little magic.

Others are filled with it.

The Guide determines how common magic is.

Sorcerer

Cost: 3 BP

You may cast spells.

Without this Trait, characters cannot normally use spell magic.

The next chapter contains spell rules.

Ritualist

Cost: 3 BP

Gain: +1 Die

when performing rituals that take at least 10 minutes.

Rituals often involve:

- Summoning
- Divination
- Blessings
- Curses

Relic User

Cost: 2 BP

Gain: +1 Die

when activating relics, ancient technology, or magical artifacts.

Example: Activating a Force Wall Ring(+2 A ring, when activated creates a 2x2' shield made of pale blue light).

FOLLOWER TRAITS

These Traits become more useful in campaigns.

Commander

Cost: 3 BP

Followers within: 6" gain:

+1 Die

when attacking.

Commander affects friendly NPCs, retainers, and soldiers.

Quartermaster

Cost: 2 BP

Food, ammunition, and supplies last twice as long for your group.

Campaigns that track resources benefit greatly from this Trait.

WEIRD TRAITS

Some heroes possess unusual gifts.

The Guide may limit these.

Night Eyes

Cost: 2 BP

Ignore penalties from darkness out to: 12"

Beyond that distance normal penalties apply.

Iron Stomach

Cost: 2 BP

Gain: +2 Armor Dice

against:

- Food poisoning
- Alcohol
- Contaminated water

Sixth Sense

Cost: 3 BP

Once per scene: Ask the Guide, "Is something dangerous nearby?"

The Guide must answer honestly.

The answer may be vague.

CURSED TRAITS

Not every Trait is beneficial.

Some adventures may grant Traits instead of allowing players to purchase them.

Marked

Value: -2 BP

Something supernatural has noticed you.
Enemies attempting to track or locate you gain: +1 Die
You gain: +1 Die
when interacting with supernatural creatures.

Haunted

Value: -2 BP

You occasionally see things others do not.

Once per session the Guide may provide:

- A vision
- A warning
- A distraction

The information may or may not be useful.

CREATING YOUR OWN TRAITS

The Traits in this chapter are only examples.

Players and Guides should feel free to create new Traits.

A good Trait should:

- Be simple
- Affect one type of action
- Cost 2–3 BP
- Be easy to remember

If a Trait requires a paragraph to explain, it is probably too complicated.

EXAMPLE HERO

Brenna the Caravan Guard

D3 A3 M3 N3 HP 6 MP 6

Traits:

Strong (2 BP)

Brave (2 BP)

Tough (2 BP)

Equipment:

Sword (+2 Damage Dice)

Shield (+1 Armor Die)

Mail Shirt (+2 Armor Dice)

Although Brenna and another D3 A3 M3 N3 character may share identical Attributes, her Traits make her better at surviving combat and standing her ground against terrifying enemies.

THE IMPORTANT PART

Attributes tell you what a character can do.

Traits tell you how they do it.

A hero with the right Trait at the right time can accomplish things that Attributes alone never could.

In the next chapter you'll learn about Magic, Miracles, Relics, and the strange powers that spend Mechanical Points.

CH 7: MAGIC, MIRACLES, RELICS & WEIRD SCIENCE

Most people solve problems with tools.

Some solve them with swords.

Others solve them with things that should not exist.

Magic, miracles, relics, mutations, psychic powers, weird science, alien technology, and stranger things all use the same system.

DAMN! does not care whether a fireball comes from:

- A wizard
- A priest
- A psychic
- A mutant
- A relic
- An ancient machine

The rules remain the same.

Only the story changes.

WHO CAN USE MAGIC?

Not everyone can use special abilities.

A character normally requires:

Sorcerer Trait

to cast spells.

Some settings may allow:

- Priests
- Psychics
- Mutants
- Engineers
- Relic Users

to use abilities without being called sorcerers.

The Guide decides.

MECHANICAL POINTS

Special abilities are powered by: MP
Mechanical Points.

MP are determined by: $N \times 2$

Example: N5

HP 10

MP 10

USING A SPELL

Most spells follow four steps.

Step 1

Spend MP.

Step 2

Roll Notoriety.

Step 3

Meet the spell Difficulty.

Step 4

Apply the effect.

EXAMPLE

Nara wishes to cast Heal.

Heal costs:

2 MP

Difficulty:

1 Success

Nara has:

N6

She rolls 6 dice.

Results:

6,5,4,3,2,1

2 Successes.

The spell works.

SPELL DIFFICULTY

Most common spells require:

1 Success

Powerful spells often require:

2–3 Successes

Ancient or dangerous magic may require:

4+ Successes

FAILED SPELLS

If the caster fails:

The MP is still spent.

The spell fails.

The Guide may introduce complications if appropriate.

Example: A failed Raise Dead may animate the wrong corpse.

CRITICAL SPELL SUCCESS

If a spell is a Critical Success:

The Guide may grant:

- Extra duration
- Greater damage
- Additional targets
- Reduced cost

CRITICAL SPELL FAILURE

If a spell is a Critical Failure:

The Guide should make things interesting.

Examples

- Unwanted attention
- Backlash
- Strange side effects
- Damaged equipment
- Temporary curse

The spell should rarely kill the caster outright.

There are plenty of other ways to die.

SPELLS

These are common examples.

Individual settings may include additional spells.

HEAL

Cost: 2 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Range: Touch

Effect:

Restore: 2 HP

A target may only benefit from Heal once per scene.

GREATER HEAL

Cost: 4 MP

Difficulty: 2 Successes

Range: Touch

Effect:

Restore: 4 HP

Remove: Bleeding

HOLY LIGHT

Cost: 1 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Range: 6"

Effect:

Undead lose: 1 HP

No Armor roll.

WARD

Cost: 2 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Range: Touch

Duration: Until your next turn.

Effect:

Target gains:

+1 Armor Die

COURAGE

Cost: 1 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Range: 6"

Duration: One Scene

Effect:

Target gains:

+1 Notoriety Die

against: Fear

Terror

Mental domination

FIRE BOLT

Cost: 2 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Range:
12"
Effect: Roll Notoriety.
Target rolls Armor.
Damage equals difference in successes.
Target gains: Burning
if at least 2 damage is dealt.

LIGHTNING
Cost: 3 MP
Difficulty: 2 Successes
Range: 18"
Effect: Roll Notoriety.
Target rolls Armor.
Damage equals difference in successes.
Metal armor grants: -1 Armor Die
against Lightning.

SHADOW CLOAK
Cost: 2 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Duration: One Scene
Effect:
Gain: +2 Dice
to: Stealth
Hiding
Sneaking

COMMAND DEAD
Cost: 2 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Range: 12"
Effect: One Undead immediately takes an additional
action.

RAISE DEAD
Cost: 4 MP
Difficulty: 2 Successes
Range: Touch
Effect: One corpse rises as a Zombie under your control.

The Zombie remains active until destroyed.

SOUL DRAIN

Cost: 3 MP

Difficulty: 2 Successes

Range: 6"

Effect: Roll Notoriety.

Target rolls Armor.

If successful:

Target loses: 2 HP

Caster gains: 2 HP

FEAR

Cost: 2 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Range: 12"

Effect: Target rolls Notoriety.

Difficulty: 2 Successes

Failure: Terrified

CURSE

Cost: 3 MP

Difficulty: 2 Successes

Range: 12"

Effect:

Choose one:

- -1 Damage
- -1 Armor
- -1 Movement
- -1 Notoriety

Duration:

One Scene

MIRACLES

Miracles use the same rules as spells.

The difference is narrative.

A priest prays.

A god answers.

The mechanics remain identical.

PSYCHIC POWERS

Psychic abilities also use the same rules.

Examples

- Telepathy
- Clairvoyance
- Telekinesis

The source changes.

The mechanics do not.

WEIRD SCIENCE

Some settings replace magic entirely.

A strange machine may:

- Fire lightning
- Heal injuries
- Animate corpses
- Open portals

Mechanically these are simply spells with different descriptions.

RELICS

Relics are ancient objects that break the rules.

Most require:

MP

and

a Notoriety roll.

Some require only one.

Others require neither.

Relics should feel rare.

A relic should be memorable.

If every shop sells relics, they stop feeling special.

EXAMPLE RELIC

Force Wall Ring

An ancient ring of unknown origin.

Cost: 1 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Effect: Create a solid wall measuring: 10' × 10'

The wall may be placed as:

- Wall
- Floor
- Ceiling

The wall remains until dismissed.

The wall cannot cut objects.
It bends around objects when created.
The wall is otherwise completely solid.

EXAMPLE RELIC

Lantern of Lost Kings

Cost: 1 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Effect: Creates bright light in a 30' radius.

Invisible creatures become visible.

Illusions become distorted.

Duration: One Scene

MAGIC ITEMS AND CURSES

Not all relics are beneficial.

Some relics may:

- Whisper
- Demand sacrifices
- Attract monsters
- Alter memories
- Change their owner

A powerful relic should never feel entirely safe.

CREATING NEW SPELLS

Most spells follow a simple formula.

Minor Effect

1–2 MP

Difficulty 1

Moderate Effect

2–4 MP

Difficulty 2

Major Effect

4–6 MP

Difficulty 3+

If unsure: Compare the new spell to existing examples.
Keep it simple.

ELRA'S MAGIC

Elra from the introductory adventure uses:

- Death Bolt
- Soul Drain
- Command Dead
- Raise Dead
- Fear

She is powerful because her Notoriety is 10.
 Most heroes never become that powerful.
 Most heroes do not survive long enough.

THE IMPORTANT PART

Magic is not a separate game.

Relics are not a separate game.

Miracles are not a separate game.

Everything uses the same DAMN! rules:

Choose an Attribute.

Roll dice.

Count successes.

See what happens.

Next you'll learn about weapons, armor, tools, supplies,
 and all the equipment adventurers use to survive long
 enough to need healing.

CH 8: EQUIPMENT

Most adventurers spend their first few jobs learning an
 important lesson:

The right tool is often more useful than another sword.

A rope can save a life.

A lantern can prevent an ambush.

A shovel can uncover treasure.

A waterskin can keep a journey from becoming a funeral.

Equipment matters.

Smart adventurers prepare.

Dead adventurers usually didn't.

BUILD POINTS AND EQUIPMENT

Equipment is purchased using Build Points (BP).

The Guide decides whether equipment may also be
 purchased with treasure during play.

Most starting characters buy equipment during character creation.

WEAPONS

Weapons add Damage Dice when attacking.

A weapon never changes your Damage Attribute.

Instead it adds additional dice to the roll.

LIGHT WEAPONS

Easy to carry.

Easy to conceal.

Cheap.

Knife

Cost: 1 BP

+1 Damage Die

Reach: Adjacent

Can be thrown 6".

Club

Cost: 1 BP

+1 Damage Die

Reach: Adjacent

Hatchet

Cost: 1 BP

+1 Damage Die

Reach: Adjacent

May also be used as a tool.

COMMON WEAPONS

The weapons most adventurers carry.

Sword

Cost: 3 BP

+2 Damage Dice

Reach: Adjacent

Spear

Cost: 2 BP

+2 Damage Dice

Reach: 2"

Attacks first against charging enemies.

Axe

Cost: 2 BP

+2 Damage Dice

Reach: Adjacent

Mace

Cost: 2 BP

+2 Damage Dice

Reach: Adjacent

Staff

Cost: 1 BP

+1 Damage Die

Reach: 2"

HEAVY WEAPONS

Powerful.

Expensive.

Difficult to conceal.

Great Sword

Cost: 4 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Reach: Adjacent

Requires two hands.

Great Axe

Cost: 4 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Reach: Adjacent

Requires two hands.

Polearm

Cost: 4 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Reach: 3"

Requires two hands.

Attacks first against charging enemies.

RANGED WEAPONS

Sling

Cost: 1 BP

+1 Damage Die

Range: 12"

Requires ammunition.

Short Bow

Cost: 2 BP

+2 Damage Dice

Range: 24"

Requires arrows.

Long Bow

Cost: 3 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Range: 30"

Requires arrows.

Crossbow

Cost: 3 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Range: 24"

Must spend one action reloading after firing.

Throwing Spear

Cost: 2 BP

+2 Damage Dice

Range: 12"

May also be used in melee.

BLACK POWDER WEAPONS

Rare but increasingly common.

Loud.

Powerful.

Unreliable.

Flintlock Pistol

Cost: 4 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Range: 12"

Requires one action to reload.

Flintlock Musket

Cost: 5 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Range: 30"

Requires one action to reload.

Blunderbuss

Cost: 5 BP

+3 Damage Dice

Range: 12"

All targets within 2" of the original target lose 1 HP.

Requires one action to reload.

ARMOR

Armor adds Armor Dice whenever defending.

Armor stacks with your Armor Attribute.

LIGHT ARMOR

Leather Armor

Cost: 2 BP

+1 Armor Die

Reinforced Leather

Cost: 3 BP

+2 Armor Dice

MEDIUM ARMOR

Mail Shirt

Cost: 4 BP

+2 Armor Dice

Scale Armor

Cost: 4 BP

+2 Armor Dice

HEAVY ARMOR

Bronze Plate

Cost: 6 BP

+3 Armor Dice

Movement reduced by 1.

Ancient Plate

Cost: 8 BP
+4 Armor Dice
Movement reduced by 1.
Rare.

SHIELDS

Small Shield
Cost: 1 BP
+1 Armor Die

Large Shield
Cost: 2 BP
+2 Armor Dice
Movement reduced by 1.

ADVENTURING GEAR

Every experienced adventurer carries most of these.

Rope (50')
Cost: 1 BP
Provides +1 Die to climbing attempts.

Grappling Hook
Cost: 1 BP
Used with rope.

Lantern
Cost: 1 BP
Provides light in darkness.
Requires fuel.

Oil Flask
Cost: 1 BP
Provides fuel for lanterns.
May also be used as a weapon.
Targets struck gain Burning.
Difficulty 1 Armor roll to avoid.

Bedroll
Cost: 1 BP
Required for comfortable Long Rests outdoors.

Waterskin
Cost: 1 BP
Carries one day's water.

Backpack
Cost: 1 BP
Carries additional equipment.

Tent
Cost: 2 BP
Provides shelter.
Helps prevent Exhaustion during bad weather.

Shovel
Cost: 1 BP
Useful for digging.
Adventurers use these more often than they admit.

Crowbar
Cost: 1 BP
Provides +1 Die when forcing open objects.

Lock Picks
Cost: 2 BP
Required to pick locks.

Hammer and Spikes
Cost: 1 BP
Useful for climbing and construction.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Bandages
Cost: 1 BP
Provides +1 Die when treating Bleeding.

Healer's Kit
Cost: 3 BP
Provides +1 Die to medical rolls.
Contains enough supplies for ten treatments.

Antidote

Cost: 2 BP

Immediately removes Poisoned.

Single use.

Herbal Remedies

Cost: 2 BP

Provides +1 Die when treating Disease.

SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT

Fishing Kit

Cost: 1 BP

Allows gathering food near water.

Hunting Kit

Cost: 2 BP

Provides +1 Die when hunting.

Fire Kit

Cost: 1 BP

Allows reliable fire starting.

Cooking Pot

Cost: 1 BP

Improves the quality of camp meals.

TOOLS

Carpenter's Tools

Cost: 2 BP

Provides +1 Die when building wooden structures.

Smith's Tools

Cost: 3 BP

Provides +1 Die when repairing weapons or armor.

Mason's Tools

Cost: 2 BP

Provides +1 Die when working with stone.

Engineer's Tools

Cost: 4 BP

Provides +1 Die when repairing machines, relics, or strange technology.

RELICS

Relics are intentionally uncommon.

The Guide should decide how available they are.

Most characters begin without relics.

Force Wall Ring

Cost: 10 BP

Requires: 1 MP

Difficulty 1 Notoriety Roll

Creates a solid 10' × 10' force wall.

May be placed as:

- Wall
- Floor
- Ceiling

Remains until dismissed.

Lantern of Lost Kings

Cost: 8 BP

Requires: 1 MP

Difficulty 1 Notoriety Roll

Reveals invisible creatures and illusions.

Duration: One Scene.

Bone Compass

Cost: 5 BP

Requires: 1 MP

Always points toward the nearest undead creature.

Duration: One Hour.

Whisper Stone

Cost: 6 BP

Requires: 1 MP

Allows communication with another Whisper Stone.

Range: Unknown.

ENCUMBRANCE

DAMN! intentionally keeps encumbrance simple.

A character may comfortably carry: 10 items

plus

their worn armor.

After that, the Guide may impose:

- Reduced Movement
- Exhaustion
- Other penalties

Use common sense.

If a player wants to carry six suits of plate armor, a wagon may be required.

STARTING EQUIPMENT

A beginning hero should generally possess:

- One primary weapon
- One backup weapon
- Armor
- Basic adventuring gear
- Food and water

A hero without supplies rarely remains a hero for long.

THE IMPORTANT PART

Equipment solves problems.

The right equipment solves problems before they become fights.

A rope prevents a fall.

A lantern reveals danger.

A shovel uncovers treasure.

A sword merely helps when all those things fail.

In the next chapter you'll learn how to build your own hero from scratch and prepare them for their first adventure.

CH 9: CHARACTER CREATION

Sooner or later every DAMN! player asks the same question: "What do I want to play?"

A warrior?

A priest?

A scout?

A thief?

A caravan guard?

A wandering monster hunter?

A relic hunter?

A hedge wizard?

A tribal chief?

A mercenary?

A character in DAMN! is built from:

- Attributes
- Traits
- Equipment

That's it.

The system is intentionally simple.

The interesting part comes from what the character does during play.

STEP 1: NAME YOUR CHARACTER

Give your character a name.

Good names are memorable.

Examples

- Brenna
- Kazza
- Doruk
- Nara
- Vasha
- Korvin
- Elra
- Tarek
- Hessa
- Jorren

Names help players remember who everyone is.

STEP 2: CREATE A CONCEPT

Before touching numbers, decide who your character is.

Examples

- Caravan Guard
- Priest
- Tomb Raider
- Hunter
- Mercenary
- Scout
- Merchant

- Relic Hunter
- Raider
- Village Champion

The concept comes first.

The numbers come second.

STEP 3: STARTING ATTRIBUTES

Every character begins with:

Attribute	Starting Value
Damage	1
Armor	1
Movement	1
Notoriety	1

Everyone starts equally.

STEP 4: BUILD POINTS

Beginning characters receive:

20 BP

(Build Points)

BP are spent on:

- Attributes
- Traits
- Equipment

STEP 5: IMPROVE ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are purchased one rank at a time.

New Value	Cost
2	2 BP
3	3 BP
4	4 BP
5	5 BP
6	6 BP

You pay the cost of the new rank.

Example

Brenna wants: Damage 3
Starting at D1: D2 costs 2 BP
D3 costs 3 BP
Total: 5 BP

ATTRIBUTE LIMITS

No Attribute may begin higher than: 6
without Guide approval.
Most starting heroes fall between: 2 and 4
in their primary Attributes.

STEP 6: CALCULATE HP AND MP

HP and MP are determined by Notoriety.
 $HP = N \times 2$
 $MP = N \times 2$

Example

N4
 $HP = 8$
 $MP = 8$

N2
 $HP = 4$
 $MP = 4$

STEP 7: BUY TRAITS

Traits make heroes unique.
Most cost: 2–3 BP
A character may purchase as many Traits as they can
afford.

Example

Doruk purchases: Alert (2 BP)
Lucky (3 BP)
Survivor (2 BP)
Total: 7 BP

STEP 8: BUY EQUIPMENT

Use remaining BP to purchase equipment.
Most adventurers should have:

- A weapon
- Armor
- Basic supplies

Example

Sword: 3 BP

Mail Shirt: 4 BP

Rope: 1 BP

Lantern: 1 BP

Backpack: 1 BP

Total: 10 BP

STEP 9: FINISH THE CHARACTER

Record:

- Name
- Attributes
- HP
- MP
- Traits
- Equipment

The character is ready to play.

BUILDING A HERO

Let's build a complete character.

Brenna the Caravan Guard

Concept: A professional guard who escorts merchants through dangerous territory.

Attributes

Damage 3/Cost: 5 BP

Armor 3/Cost: 5 BP

Movement 2/Cost: 2 BP

Notoriety 3/Cost: 5 BP

Total: 17 BP

HP = $N3 \times 2 = \text{HP } 6$

MP = $N3 \times 2 = MP 6$

Traits

Brave: 2 BP

Strong: 2 BP

Total Traits: 4 BP

Equipment

Sword: 3 BP

Mail Shirt: 4 BP

Shield: 1 BP

Final Character:

D3 A3 M2 N3 HP 6 MP 6

Traits: Brave, Strong

Equipment: Sword (+2 Damage Dice)

Mail Shirt (+2 Armor Dice)

Shield (+1 Armor Die)

BALANCED STARTING CHARACTER EXAMPLES

Most beginning heroes resemble one of the following.

Warrior

D4 A3 M2 N2

Strong

Brave

Good equipment.

Excellent in combat.

Weak outside combat.

Scout

D2 A2 M4 N3

Alert

Tracker

Fast

Excellent explorer.

Fragile in a fight.

Priest

D1 A2 M2 N5

Sorcerer

Healer

Brave

Strong support character.

Powerful magic.

Tomb Raider

D2 A3 M3 N4

Lucky

Alert

Survivor

Excellent all-around adventurer.

COMMON CHARACTER CREATION MISTAKES

Buying Nothing But Weapons

Dead adventurers often carry excellent weapons.

Bring rope.

Bring food.

Bring light.

Ignoring Notoriety

Notoriety controls:

- HP
- MP
- Magic
- Fear resistance
- Investigation
- Leadership

A character with N1 is extremely vulnerable.

Ignoring Movement

Many fights are won by positioning.

Not raw power.

Movement keeps heroes alive.

Ignoring Armor

Eventually everyone gets hit.

Armor helps survive it.

Spending Every BP On Attributes

Traits and equipment matter.

A character with the right tool often succeeds where a stronger character fails.

ADVANCEMENT

After adventures, heroes gain BP.

Typical rewards:

Adventure	BP Award
Minor	1 BP
Standard	2 BP
Major	3 BP
Legendary	4-5 BP

Spend BP between adventures.

IMPROVING ATTRIBUTES

Use the same costs as character creation.

Example:

Increasing Damage 3 to Damage 4 costs:

4 BP

BUYING NEW TRAITS

Characters may purchase new Traits whenever they gain enough BP.

Guide approval may be required.

BUYING BETTER EQUIPMENT

Many heroes improve through gear rather than statistics.

A better weapon may be more useful than another Attribute increase.

RETIREMENT

Eventually some heroes become:

- Chiefs
- Priests
- Warlords
- Merchants
- Rulers

Retired heroes make excellent NPCs.

Many Guides build entire campaigns around former player characters.

THE IMPORTANT PART

The best DAMN! characters are not the strongest.

They are the ones players remember.

A one-eyed caravan guard with a lucky spear.

A priest who talks to ghosts.

A thief who never stops bragging.

A hunter who claims every bad idea is "probably safe."

Build someone interesting.

The numbers will take care of themselves.

In the next chapter you'll meet four pre-generated heroes and learn how to begin playing immediately.

SAMPLE CHARACTER SHEET

Name: _____

Concept: _____

Damage: _____

Armor: _____

Movement: _____

Notoriety: _____

HP: _____

MP: _____

Traits:

Equipment:

Notes:

SAMPLE CHARACTER SHEET

Name: _____

Concept: _____

Damage: _____

Armor: _____

Movement: _____

Notoriety: _____

HP: _____

MP: _____

Traits:

Equipment:

Notes:

SAMPLE CHARACTER SHEET

Name: _____

Concept: _____

Damage: _____

Armor: _____

Movement: _____

Notoriety: _____

HP: _____

MP: _____

Traits:

Equipment:

Notes:

SAMPLE CHARACTER SHEET

Name: _____

Concept: _____

Damage: _____

Armor: _____

Movement: _____

Notoriety: _____

HP: _____

MP: _____

Traits:

Equipment:

Notes:

CH 10: PRE-GENERATED HEROES

Not everyone wants to spend time building a character before starting an adventure.

That's perfectly fine.

The following heroes are ready to play immediately.

Choose one.

Grab some dice.

Begin the adventure.

These heroes were designed for **The Shrine of Elra**, but they work equally well in most DAMN! adventures.

Each hero was built using the same rules found in Ch 9.

BRENNA THE CARAVAN GUARD

"If it wanted me dead, it should have tried harder."
Brenna has spent years escorting merchants through dangerous territory. Bandits. Raiders. Hungry beasts. Undead. Most of them failed. Brenna isn't the strongest warrior in the world. She's simply still alive.

Attributes
D3A3M2N3

Derived Statistics
HP 6 MP 6

Traits
Strong
Roll +1 Damage Die when:

- Breaking objects
- Forcing doors
- Lifting heavy objects
- Grappling

Brave
Roll +1 Notoriety Die when resisting:

- Fear
- Terror
- Intimidation

Equipment
Sword (+2 Damage Dice)
Mail Shirt (+2 Armor Dice)
Shield (+1 Armor Die)

Backpack
Rope (50')
Lantern
Waterskin
Bedroll

Combat
Attack Roll: Damage 3
Sword +2
Total: 5 Dice

Defense Roll: Armor 3
Mail +2
Shield +1
Total: 6 Dice

Why Play Brenna?
Choose Brenna if you want:

- Straightforward combat
- High survivability
- Reliable performance

Brenna is easy for new players to learn.

KAZZA THE SCOUT

"Tracks don't lie. People do."

Kazza spent most of their life outdoors.

They know game trails, hidden paths, and the quickest way through difficult terrain.

Kazza rarely fights fair.

That's why Kazza usually wins.

Attributes

D2A2M4N3

Derived Statistics

HP 6 MP 6

Traits

Tracker

+1 Die when:

- Hunting
- Tracking
- Following trails

Alert

+1 Die when:

- Searching
- Spotting traps
- Detecting ambushes

Fast

Movement increases by +1.

Already included above.

Equipment

Short Bow (+2 Damage Die)

Knife (+1 Damage Die)

Leather Armor (+1 Armor Die)

Rope

Backpack

Lantern

Waterskin

Bedroll

Fishing Kit

Combat

Bow Attack: Damage 2

Bow +2

Total: 4 Dice

Knife Attack: Damage 2

Knife +1

Total: 3 Dice

Defense: Armor 2

Leather +1

Total: 3 Dice

Why Play Kazza?

Choose Kazza if you enjoy:

- Exploration
- Investigation
- Mobility
- Ranged combat

Kazza excels at avoiding problems before they become fights.

NARA THE PRIESTESS

"The dead should stay dead."

Nara serves a small but respected temple devoted to healing, protection, and driving away darkness.

Most people think of Nara as a healer.

Undead quickly learn otherwise.

Attributes
D1A2M2N5

Derived Statistics
HP 10 MP 10

Traits
Sorcerer
May cast spells.

Healer
Whenever Nara restores HP, restore +1 additional HP.

Brave
+1 against Fear and Terror.

Equipment
Staff (+1 D)
Holy Symbol
Healer's Kit
Backpack
Lantern
Bedroll
Waterskin
Herbal Remedies

Combat
Staff Attack: Damage 1
Staff +1
Total: 2 Dice

Defense: Armor 2
Total: 2 Dice

Spells

Heal
Cost: 2 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Range: Touch
Restore: 2 HP
Because Nara has Healer:
Restore 3 HP instead.

Holy Light
Cost: 1 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Range: 6"
All Undead lose: 1 HP
No Armor roll.

Ward
Cost: 2 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Range: Touch
Target gains: +1 Armor
until Nara's next turn.

Courage
Cost: 1 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Range: 6"
Target gains: +1 Notoriety
against Fear and Terror.

Why Play Nara?
Choose Nara if you enjoy:

- Magic
- Healing
- Support abilities
- Solving problems creatively

Nara is the most complicated hero in the group.

DORUK THE TOMB ROBBER

"If nobody wanted it stolen, they should have buried it deeper."

Doruk specializes in entering places that sensible people avoid. Most of those places contain treasure.

Some contain monsters. Occasionally they contain both. Doruk considers that a bonus.

Attributes
D2A3M3N4

Derived Statistics
HP 8 MP 8

Traits
Lucky
Once per session:
Reroll any Ones on a single roll. You must keep the new result.

Alert
+1 Die when searching or detecting danger.

Survivor
+1 Armor Die against:

- Disease
- Poison
- Hazards

Equipment
Short Sword (+2 Damage)
Leather Armor (+1 Armor)
Lock Picks
Crowbar
Rope
Lantern
Backpack
Waterskin
Bedroll

Combat
Attack: Damage 2
Sword +2
Total: 4 Dice

Defense: Armor 3
Leather +1
Total: 4 Dice

Why Play Doruk?
Choose Doruk if you enjoy:

- Exploration
- Treasure hunting
- Problem solving
- Taking risks

Doruk is often the first person into a tomb. Whether that is wise remains open for debate.

A BALANCED PARTY

The four heroes complement one another.

Brenna:

Front-line fighter.

Kazza:

Scout and explorer.

Nara:

Magic and healing.

Doruk:

Treasure hunter and investigator.

Together they can handle most situations.

IF YOU HAVE FEWER PLAYERS

One Player

Use:

Brenna

or

Doruk

and reduce the number of enemies.

Two Players

Recommended:

Brenna and Nara

or

Kazza and Doruk

Three Players

Any combination works well.

Four Players

Use all four heroes.

This is the intended experience for the introductory adventure.

BEFORE THE ADVENTURE

Before beginning:

1. Read your character.
2. Read your Traits.
3. Read your equipment.
4. Read your spells if you have them.
5. Ask questions.

Do not worry about memorizing every rule.

You will learn them during play.
The Guide's job is to help.

THE IMPORTANT PART

A good character is not defined by numbers.

A good character is defined by choices.

The heroes in this chapter are capable.

Whether they survive is entirely up to the people playing them.

In the next chapter you'll begin your first DAMN!
adventure:

The Shrine of Elra.

ADVENTURE: THE SHRINE OF ELRA

An Introductory Adventure for 1–4 Players

This adventure is designed to teach the DAMN! rules.

During play the heroes will encounter:

- Investigation
- Exploration
- Combat
- Hazards
- Conditions
- Treasure
- Undead
- Magic
- A powerful boss encounter

Everything needed to learn the game appears somewhere in this adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For generations the people of Blackthorn Village avoided the old hill north of town.

The hill is unnatural.

Too round.

Too smooth.

Too deliberate.

Everyone knows it contains a tomb.

No one knows who built it.

No one remembers when.

Recently livestock have vanished.
Several villagers disappeared.
Strange lights have been seen atop the hill after sunset.
The village elder fears something has awakened beneath the earth.
The villagers are correct.
Long ago Elra served a forgotten goddess of death, memory, and silence.
When her cult was destroyed she was sealed beneath the hill.
Recently grave robbers broke part of the tomb open.
Now Elra gathers strength.
The dead answer her call.
If she is not stopped, Blackthorn Village will become the first of many graves.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Read to players:

The rain has finally stopped.
Mud clings to boots, wagon wheels, and everything else unfortunate enough to touch the road.
Blackthorn Village sits ahead, little more than a cluster of houses surrounded by fields.
Smoke rises from cookfires.
Chickens wander the road.
People watch you with the cautious look reserved for strangers and trouble.
An old woman waits near the village well.
She appears relieved when she sees armed travelers.

THE ELDER'S OFFER

The elder, Murga Thornroot, explains:

- Three villagers are missing.
- Strange lights appear on the hill.
- The dead have been seen walking at night.
- Nobody is willing to investigate.

She offers:

- Free food and lodging
- 10 Silver each
- Anything recovered from the tomb

If asked:

The hill contains an ancient tomb.

No one living has entered it.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Before leaving town the heroes may investigate.
Each successful Notoriety roll provides one fact.

Difficulty: 1

Facts:

1. The lights began three weeks ago.
2. Livestock vanish near the hill.
3. Old stories mention a queen named Elra.
4. The tomb entrance opened recently.
5. Villagers report hearing singing at night.
6. The missing villagers disappeared near the hill.

THE ROAD TO THE HILL

The hill lies roughly two hours north of the village.
Fields gradually give way to untended grassland.
The road becomes little more than a muddy path.
The closer the heroes get to the hill, the quieter the world becomes.

Birdsong fades.

The wind seems weaker.

Even insects grow scarce.

ENCOUNTER: THE RESTLESS DEAD

Read:

Ahead, several figures wander among the weeds.

At first they appear to be travelers.

Then one turns.

Its jaw hangs loose.

Rotting skin stretches across yellowed bone.

Empty eyes stare toward you.

One by one the others turn as well.

This encounter teaches basic combat before the heroes enter the tomb.

4 Restless Dead

D1 A1 M1 N1

HP 2

MP 2

Traits

Undead

Immune to Fear.

Attacks

Claws

+1 Damage Die

Rotting fingers and broken nails.

Bite

+1 Damage Die

If the Bite deals damage, the target must roll Armor.

Difficulty 1.

Failure: Gain Bleeding.

Tactics

The Restless Dead are stupid.

They move directly toward the nearest living creature.

They do not retreat.

They do not use strategy.

They simply attack until destroyed.

Treasure

Searching the corpses reveals:

- 4 Silver
- Rusted jewelry worth 2 Silver
- A damaged lantern
- A torn village cloak belonging to one of the missing villagers

This confirms the villagers likely entered the tomb.

ARRIVAL AT THE HILL

Eventually the heroes reach the hill.

Read:

The hill rises from the surrounding fields like a great earthen mound.

Ancient stone blocks protrude from the soil.

Moss and roots cover weathered carvings.

A dark opening gapes near the summit.

Cold air drifts from within.

Something inside is waiting.

The entrance stands open.

Fresh footprints lead into the darkness.
The heroes may enter whenever they are ready.

THE TOMB

The tomb contains three chambers.
Each chamber introduces new rules and dangers.
Room One teaches combat.
Room Two teaches hazards and exploration.
Room Three contains Elra.

ROOM ONE — HALL OF BONES

Read:

Broken pillars line the chamber.
Bones litter the floor.
Dust hangs motionless in the cold air.
Four stone statues stand watch over the room.
As you step farther inside, the bones begin to rattle.
Something is waking up.

Monsters

2 Skeleton Guardians
D2 A2 M2 N1
HP 2 MP 2

Traits

Undead
Immune to Fear.

Equipment

Rusted Spears
+2 Damage Dice
Reach 2"

Tactics

The Skeleton Guardians attack intruders immediately.
Unlike the Restless Dead, they possess enough intelligence to fight together.
They attempt to block exits and force enemies into unfavorable positions.

Treasure

Searching the room requires:

Difficulty 1 Notoriety

Success reveals:

- Bronze Spear
- Oil Flask
- 20 Silver
- A fragment of an ancient inscription mentioning "Elra, Beloved of Silence"

Short Rest Opportunity

Once the room is cleared the heroes may safely take a Short Rest before continuing deeper into the tomb.

ROOM TWO – THE FLOODED CRYPT

A narrow stone passage descends from the Hall of Bones.

Water drips steadily from the ceiling.

The air grows colder.

The smell changes.

Dust gives way to stagnant water and decay.

Read:

The corridor opens into a flooded chamber.

Black water covers much of the floor.

Broken stone coffins protrude from the murky water like islands.

Ancient murals line the walls.

The paint has faded, but you can still make out pale figures kneeling before a beautiful woman seated upon a throne.

A stone bridge once crossed the room.

Most of it has collapsed.

Somewhere in the darkness, water slowly drips into the flooded chamber.

WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE?

This room teaches:

- Exploration
- Difficulty Rolls
- Hazards
- Searching
- Conditions
- Environmental Combat

The room appears abandoned.

It is not.

THE FLOODED FLOOR

Most of the room is covered by waist-deep water.

Crossing the flooded sections requires:

Movement Roll

Difficulty 1

Success:

Cross safely.

Failure:

Fall into the water.

Lose 1 HP.

Become soaked.

COLLAPSING STONE BRIDGE

The remains of the bridge can still be crossed.

Doing so requires:

Movement Roll

Difficulty 2

Success:

Cross safely.

Failure:

The bridge collapses.

Lose 2 HP.

Gain Bleeding.

The bridge becomes impassable afterward.

SEARCHING THE MURALS

A successful Notoriety Roll

Difficulty 1

reveals:

The murals depict Elra before her death.

She appears as a queen, priestess, and sorceress.

Additional Successes reveal:

1 Success:

Elra ruled the cult.

2 Successes:

The cult worshipped a goddess of silence and memory.

3 Successes:

Elra was buried alive by her own followers.

This information may be useful later.

THE MISSING VILLAGERS

Three villagers entered the tomb.

The heroes may discover what happened.

Searching the room requires:

Notoriety Difficulty 2

Success reveals:

A partially submerged corpse trapped beneath fallen masonry.

One of the missing villagers.

Nearby is a leather pouch containing:

- 12 Silver
- Small Ruby worth 10 Silver
- Crude map of the tomb entrance

The villager clearly died attempting to flee.

THE WATER

Anyone entering the water attracts attention.

The water is not empty.

Something waits beneath the surface.

MONSTERS

2 DROWNED DEAD

The Drowned Dead were once members of Elra's cult.

Now they lurk beneath the flooded crypt.

Drowned Dead

D2 A2 M2 N1

HP 4 MP 2

Traits

Undead

Immune to Fear

Water Dweller

Move normally in water.

Attacks

Rusted Claws

+1 Damage Die

Drowning Grip

+1 Damage Die

If damage is dealt: Target must roll Movement.

Difficulty 1.

Failure: Pulled into the water.

Tactics

The Drowned Dead remain submerged until someone enters the water.

Then they attack.

They prefer isolated targets.

They attempt to drag victims away from allies.

OPTIONAL TREASURE

One stone coffin remains intact.

Opening it requires: Damage Roll

Difficulty 2

or

Crowbar

Difficulty 1

Inside lies:

- Silver Death Mask (20 Silver)
- Ancient Ring
- Preserved ceremonial dagger (+1 Damage Die)

The coffin also contains a hidden danger.

TRAP: GRAVE MOLD

The coffin contains ancient spores.

Anyone opening it must roll Armor.

Difficulty 1

Failure: Gain Diseased.

The symptoms will not appear until after the adventure.

THE SECRET DOOR

A successful search reveals a hidden stone panel.

Notoriety Difficulty 2.

Behind it lies:

- 15 Silver
- Healing Herbs
- Ancient Journal Fragment

JOURNAL FRAGMENT

Read: We sealed her beneath the hill.

She sang even as the stones closed around her.

Some wished to flee.

Others wished to kneel.

I fear we have made a terrible mistake.

If the seals fail, may the gods have mercy upon whoever finds this place.

This should inform the players that Elra was feared even by her own followers.

SHORT REST OPPORTUNITY

After defeating the Drowned Dead and exploring the chamber, the heroes may safely take a Short Rest.

This is likely their last safe opportunity before confronting Elra.

EXIT TO ROOM THREE

At the far end of the crypt stands a pair of massive bronze doors.

The doors are covered in strange symbols.

The symbols depict:

- Eyes being closed
- Mouths being sealed
- Crowns being broken
- A woman seated upon a throne of skulls

The doors stand slightly open.

Cold air drifts through the gap.

Beyond waits Elra.

ROOM THREE — THE SHRINE OF ELRA

The bronze doors groan open.

Beyond lies the heart of the tomb.

Read:

The chamber beyond is enormous.

Black stone pillars rise into darkness.

Hundreds of candles burn without flickering.

The air smells of incense, dust, and old graves.

At the center of the room stands a raised altar of pale stone.

Behind it towers a statue of a beautiful woman wearing a crown of thorns and bones.

The statue's face has been carved away.

Three villagers kneel before the altar.

Their eyes are closed.
They do not move.
Standing among them is a woman.
Tall.
Pale blue skin.
Long dark hair.
She wears ancient robes untouched by time.
Her beauty is almost painful to look at.
Slowly she turns toward you.
She smiles.
"Visitors."
"How lovely."

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Elra has not fully regained her power.
Not yet.
She has spent weeks gathering strength.
The missing villagers are alive.
They are under her influence.
The altar channels power from the tomb into Elra.
Destroying the altar weakens her.

FEAR TEST

When the heroes first see Elra: Everyone rolls Notoriety.
Difficulty 2.
Failure: Terrified
Success: No effect.
Characters with Brave gain +1 Die.

THE ALTAR

The altar fuels Elra's magic.
The heroes may attack it.

Death Altar
D0A4M0N0
HP 8

Effects

While the altar remains intact:
Elra gains: +1 Success on all spell rolls.
At the beginning of every round: Recover 1 MP.

Destroying The Altar

If reduced to 0 HP: The altar shatters.

All candles immediately extinguish.

Elra loses:

- Bonus spell success
- MP recovery

Elra immediately loses:

2 MP

as the power surge collapses.

THE CHARMED VILLAGERS

Three villagers kneel before the altar.

They are alive.

Freeing a Villager

A hero adjacent to a villager may spend an action.

Roll Notoriety.

Difficulty 2.

Success: The villager awakens.

The villager crawls away and takes no further part in the battle.

Failure

The villager remains entranced.

The action is wasted.

ELRA, DEATH SORCERESS

The final challenge of the adventure.

Elra is far more powerful than anything encountered so far.

The heroes are expected to work together.

Charging her alone is a good way to become part of the scenery.

Elra

D3A4M3N10

HP 20 MP 20

Traits

Undead

Sorcerer

Leader

Fearless

Equipment
Ritual Dagger
+1 Damage Die

Special Ability
Beauty Beyond Death
Elra's unnatural beauty distracts mortal minds.
The first attack made against Elra each round suffers:
-1 Damage Die
minimum 1 die.
Heroes eventually learn to focus through the distraction.

Special Ability
Queen of the Dead
All undead within 12" gain: +1 Armor Die
If no undead remain, this ability has no effect.

ELRA'S SPELLS

Death Bolt
Cost: 2 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success
Range: 12"
Roll Notoriety.
Target rolls Armor.
Damage equals the difference.

Soul Drain
Cost: 3 MP
Difficulty: 2 Successes
Range: 6"
Roll Notoriety.
Target rolls Armor.
If successful:
Target loses 2 HP.
Elra heals 2 HP.

Command Dead
Cost: 2 MP
Difficulty: 1 Success

Range: 12", One Undead immediately takes another action.

Raise Dead

Cost: 4 MP

Difficulty: 2 Successes

Range: Touch

Elra animates a corpse as a Restless Dead.

Fear

Cost: 2 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Range: 12", Target must pass a Notoriety Roll.

Difficulty 2.

Failure: Terrified.

ELRA'S TACTICS

Elra is intelligent.

She prefers manipulation before violence.

At the beginning of combat she says:

"You need not die here."

"Kneel, and I will remember your names."

If attacked she fights without hesitation.

Round One

Fear

or

Death Bolt

Round Two

Soul Drain

against the most injured hero.

Later Rounds

Raise Dead from nearby remains.

Use Fear on dangerous opponents.

Use Soul Drain to remain alive.

OPTIONAL MINIONS

For groups of four experienced players.

At the beginning of Round Two:

2 Restless Dead emerge from side passages.

Restless Dead
D1A1M1N1
HP 2 MP 2
Claws +1 Damage Die
Bite +1 Damage Die

VICTORY

The heroes win if: Elra reaches 0 HP.

ELRA'S DEATH

Read: Elra staggers.
Cracks spread across her pale skin.
The candles throughout the chamber flicker wildly.
The beautiful smile finally disappears.
For the first time, she looks tired.
Very tired.
"Again..."
she whispers.
"Always again."
Her body collapses into dust.
A cold wind rushes through the chamber.
Then everything becomes still.

SAVING THE VILLAGERS

If any villagers survive: Blackthorn Village celebrates the heroes' return.
Murga Thornroot keeps her promise.
The heroes become local legends.
At least until the next disaster.

TREASURE

Searching the shrine reveals:

- 150 Silver
- Gold Death Crown (50 Silver)
- Ancient Ritual Dagger (+1 Damage Die)
- Jeweled Chalice (25 Silver)

BONUS TREASURE

Hidden beneath the altar.
Difficulty 2 Notoriety to discover.
Contains: Ring of Courage

Relic

Cost to Activate: 1 MP

Difficulty: 1 Success

Effect: All allies within 6"

gain: +1 Die against Fear
for one scene.

EXPERIENCE

The heroes should receive: 2 BP
for completing the adventure.

Award an additional: 1 BP

if:

- All villagers survive.
- The altar is destroyed.
- Elra is defeated.

Maximum Reward: 5 BP

CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN

Elra was only one servant of a forgotten death goddess.

Questions remain.

Who built the tomb?

Who worshipped the goddess?

Why was Elra so feared?

What lies deeper beneath the hill?

How long until Elra returns for her vengeance?

Those answers are adventures for another day.

THE END

Congratulations.

You have completed your first DAMN! adventure.

You have explored ruins.

Fought undead.

Avoided traps.

Found treasure.

Defeated a powerful villain.

Most importantly:

You now know how to play DAMN!.

Now go find something else that should have stayed
buried.