

QUICK ENCOUNTERS

This variant rule shortens encounters dramatically, while keeping the aftermath. Using the theater of the mind, Game Master and players plan the combat, check the success of their strategies and discover the results.

Sometimes fighting is unavoidable: you might fail to find an agreement with some mooks or take a wrong turn in a dungeon. Time is of the essence in a session, but you don't want to handwave a battle that might be challenging.

This variant rule is not meant to completely replace encounters, but to allow a faster transition to the big showdown. It suits a campaign more focused around story and characters.

ENCOUNTER DCS

Threat	DC
10 XP or less	1
Trivial	5
Low	10
Moderate	15
Severe	20
Extreme	25*

*Add +1 to the Encounter DC for every 40 XP above the XP Budget.

ENCOUNTER VARIABLES

To find out the outcome of a battle, each player makes a check against the DC corresponding to the threat level of the encounter, as listed in the Encounter DCs table.

This check cannot be altered by fortune or misfortune effects. All players add the following bonuses or penalties to their roll depending on their global situation (at most one per table row):

ROLL MODIFIERS

Circumstance	Modifier
Numerical advantage: there are more allies than opponents;	+1
Numerical disadvantage: there are more opponents than allies;	-1
Surprise: most opponents are surprised by the party;	+1
Surprised: most party members are surprised by the opponents.	-1
Initiative: more than half of the party members have higher initiative than some of the opponents.	+1
The party adopts complex and well-thought-out strategies ^[1] ;	+4
The party adopts simple but effective strategies ^[2] ;	+2
The party adopts basic default strategies ^[3] ;	0
The party doesn't use a strategy;	-2
The party displays lack of thought and teamwork.	-4
Sharpness: the party has not fought in an encounter since the last daily preparations;	+2
The party has not fought in an encounter of Moderate threat or more since the last daily preparations.	+1
Health: all party members have maximum Hit Points;	+1
The lowest party member's HP is at least half its maximum value;	0
The lowest party member's HP is at least one quarter its maximum value;	-1
The highest party member's HP is at most half of its maximum value.	-2
Field: the party has favourable terrain over the opponents ^[4] ;	+2
The party has unfavourable terrain relative to the opponents ^[5] .	-2
Attire: the party's equipment is superior relative to the opponents;	+1
The party's equipment is inferior relative to the opponents.	-1
Mental health: the party is in optimal psychological condition;	+1
The party is mostly anxious or stressed;	0
The party recently suffered traumas or shocking events.	-1
The opponents want to capture half or more of the party alive.	+2
The opponents want to capture less than half of the party alive;	+1
The party wants to capture less than half of the opponents alive;	-1
The party wants to capture half or more of the opponents alive.	-2
The party plans to escape—without defeating or capturing all the opponents—after completing an objective.	+1

¹ Setting traps in advance, devising ways to counter specific move and abilities of the opponents (e.g. muzzling a dragon to prevent breath attacks).

² Fighting exploiting weaknesses, avoiding resistances and immunities. Using a fighting style disadvantageous to the opponents (e.g. forcing a melee character in a long range exchange, or conversely exploiting covers against ranged units).

³ Fighting with a formation, using straightforward tactics (e.g. role switching to heal a companion).

⁴ E.g. Fighting a flying creature inside a cave or a vampire in a battlefield mostly exposed to sunlight, holding a fort.

⁵ E.g. fighting in the darkness without Darkvision or trying to escape in a heavily guarded route.

SOLVING THE ENCOUNTER STEP BY STEP

Following the next points, the GM determines the results of the battle:

1. If the party is aware of the opponents before the start of the encounter, they have a set-up phase (preparing traps, equipment, devising strategies, etc...).
2. Determine surprise.
3. Determine initiative.
4. If there wasn't a set-up phase, the party gets a number of Recall Knowledge checks equal to the number of party members, that they get to apply how they want (e.g. they all could be used by only one character^[6]) to devise a strategy on the spot.
5. Determine the strategy efficacy (e.g. traps working, how the environment affects fighting, if the right weaknesses are targeted, etc...).
6. Each party member roll a d20 with the resulting modifier—calculated with the Roll Modifiers table—against the encounter DC to determine the outcomes for each one of them (see below). If at least one party member is conscious at the end, the party wins and the opponents are captured or defeated.
7. Encounter mode ends.

OUTCOMES: LOST RESOURCES

The Damage Withstood table lists the Hit Points lost in the encounter: the damage a character takes is equal to the indicated dice result times the character level (minimum 1). This damage cannot be blocked or reduced in any way (save for few exceptions, see below), if it would reduce your Hit Points to 0, it does. In the latter case, you gain the dying condition as normal, but you attempt the recovery checks one after the other until you either lose the dying condition or die. You cannot be assisted until encounter mode ends.

DAMAGE WITHSTOOD

Threat	Critical Success	Success	Failure	Critical Failure
10 XP or less	0	1	1d4	2d4
Trivial	1d4	2d4	3d4	4d4
Low	1d6	2d6	3d6	4d6
Moderate	1d8	2d8	3d8	4d8
Severe	1d10	2d10	3d10	4d10
Extreme	1d12	2d12	3d12	Death*

Death will not incur if the enemy creatures choose to capture someone alive, this is also true for recovery checks.

REDUCING DAMAGE

A character can spend any number of spell slots or prepared spells to reduce the damage taken by an amount equal to the rank of the spell for each.

The following resources are equivalent and can be substituted to spell slots for the above:

- Focus point, equivalent to a spell slot of rank equal to half your level rounded up.
- Staff charge, equivalent to a spell slot of rank 1.
- Consumable, equivalent to a spell slot of rank equal to half the item level rounded up. Up to 3 can be used in this way.
- Versatile Vial, equivalent to a spell slot of rank equal to half your level rounded up.
- Battle Medicine, equivalent to a spell slot of rank equal to half your level rounded up. You must not be immune to Battle Medicine to do so. Using it this way counts as having using battle medicine onto yourself.

If you have a shield or permanent minion (animal companion, familiar or pet) you can shift a part of the damage to them:

- You reduce the damage taken equal to double the hardness of the shield equipped, but the shield takes damage equal to 4 times its hardness.
- You can transfer your damage to your minions, for every 5 HP they lose, reduce the damage taken by 1.

⁶. Adjusting the difficulty for additional knowledge as normal for multiple attempts.