

# ADVENTURE SQUAD

By Andrew Domino

Based on Dungeon Squad by Jason Morningstar and related games

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Adventure Squad blends the half-dozen or so different Dungeon Squad-inspired games into one generic role playing game system. It's, hopefully, very rules light, for people who have never played a pen and paper RPG before, but it's easy enough to make more complex, if that's what you want in the game.

These rules assume you're familiar with RPGs (i.e., it doesn't explain all the terms or how to roleplay). To play, you'll need pencils, character sheets — one is found on the last page — and at least one set of game dice, or one set per player. The dice are measured in “die sizes”: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20. If the rules call for your character's d6 Skill to increase one die size, for example, your skill becomes a d8, and if the character's d10 Skill increases two die sizes, it moves to a d20. Die sizes never go below d4 or above d20.

## CHARACTER CREATION

Name: Your character's name.

Player: Your name.

Concept: A word or phrase describing your character, like “suave super-spy,” “silent, forest-dwelling master archer,” or “rough, tough space pirate captain.”

Race: A race or species provides a 1 die size increase whenever a character of that race attempts certain types of action. For example, a dwarf character with a Body of d8 rolls a d10 when attempting to resist being poisoned or when someone tries to push him out of the way. Some races instead offer a special power of some kind, which may be able to be improved or replaced with an appropriate Ability. Example races are listed; use these as guidelines when creating your own races.

Beast Man: Increase a die when intimidating others or lifting heavy objects.

Dwarf: Increase a die when attempting to physically resist someone (not counting losing Hit Points).

Elf: Increase a die when working with magic or when in forests.

Robot: Always have the Armor Ability worth 1 point.

Vampire: Increase a die when searching for blood or convincing non-vampires to do what you want.

Werewolf: Change into a wolf for a number of turns per day equal to your Body die size.

Humans can either have a culture that counts as their “race” (like Viking or desert-dweller), or the player of a human character can reroll one single die once per game session, and take the better of the two rolls as his final result. Choose a race or culture from the ones the game master makes available.

*Skills and Abilities*: Characters have five statistics: three Skills and two Abilities. The d4, d6, d8, d10 and d12 are used when creating characters. The d20 is only used when increasing a d12 by one die size.

Skills: Every character is represented by three Skills. They are:

**BODY** — the character's knack with physical stuff, like lifting heavy things, sneaking past a watchful guard, climbing a cliff, and so on.

**FIGHT** — the character's talent with fists, swords, guns, clubs, knives, karate chops, and so on.

**MIND** — the character's capability with his brains, including knowledge, inventing and even social skills like fast-talk, languages and etiquette. The Mind Skill is also used for using supernatural powers like spells.

Assign the d4, d8 and d12 to the three Skills. For example, a magical burglar-type character might have Mind d12, Body d8 and Fight d4. Let's hope he has someone along to keep him out of harm's way in a fight!

**Abilities:** Every character has two special Abilities, which are used with the Skills to do things in the game. Like Skills, Abilities have die sizes. Choose two Abilities from the list below, and assign one the die size d6 and the other the die size d10. Feel free to make up your own Abilities, using the ones below as a guide. You can describe Abilities any way you like; for example, a character with the Armor Ability may be wearing a suit of chain mail or a bulletproof vest, or may even have the supernatural ability to instantly heal minor cuts and bruises.

Some Abilities are labeled as spells, though they might be represented as psychic disciplines, superhero powers, and so on. To use a “spell,” you must first make a successful Mind Skill roll (see below).

**ARMOR** reduces damage taken by a roll of its die. Thus, if you are hit for 7 points of damage and have armor, you can roll that die and reduce damage taken by that amount, possibly all the way to 0 (zero), if you roll 7 or more on a d10, for example.

**ATHLETICS** is for heroes who regularly climb, leap, tumble and twist. Whenever you would roll your Body die to see if you succeed at such an action, roll your athletics die too and add the results together.

**BOW** or other non-firearm ranged weapon (crossbow, throwing knife, etc.) can damage a foe from a distance, doing its die in damage, but only half the time. If the Fight roll to attack is odd and/or below the enemy’s Difficulty, it does not count. If it is even and equal to or above the enemy’s Difficulty, it actually hits. Bows never run out of ammunition.

**CHARISMA** is for heroes who actually talk to people in town and show proper respect to leaders. Whenever you would roll your Mind die to see if you succeed at such an action, roll your charisma die too and add the results together.

**COMPUTERS** is for heroes who research using the Internet, who “hack” into secure systems and who create elaborate electronic devices. Whenever you would roll your Mind die to see if you succeed at such an action, roll your computers die too and add the results together.

**DAZZLE** (spell) causes one human-size enemy to hesitate for one turn for every 2 numbers rolled on the dazzle die, if the spell is successful. Bigger creatures require 4 numbers; smaller ones, only 1 number. Victims cannot take any action of any kind when they are dazzled. If this Mind Skill roll failed, you can try again, but once the spell works, it is used up for the rest of the battle. For example, a dazzle die result of 5 against an evil human means the villain must lose 2 turns.

**FENCING** training shows you the weak spots in an enemy’s defenses, and how to exploit them with a flourish. Add this Ability die to every Fight roll when making an attack using a sword, axe or non-ranged weapon. The special ability is not used for damage rolls. It also does not apply to natural weapons like punches or animal bites.

**FIREBALL** (spell): If the spell is successful, roll the fireball’s die, then multiply the result by three. That damage is applied to one target. Anyone near the enemy (two spaces or less, if you’re using miniatures) takes the straight, pre-multiplication fireball die in damage as well. If this Mind Skill roll failed, you can try again, but once the spell works, it is used up for the day. Unlike a bow or gun, this spell hits the enemy on an even or odd result above the enemy’s Difficulty.

**GUN** weapons, like bow weapons, can hit an enemy far away, but they require an even number on the Fight roll, and a result over the enemy’s Difficulty, to hit. When a gun hits, roll the gun’s die and add 2 to determine the damage of the weapon. If the game master allows, rifles can do damage equal to the gun die +4, and heavy weapons can do damage equal to the gun die +6 or more. Guns never run out of ammunition, but separate rules for rapid fire are too complicated for this game.

**HEALING** (spell) restores its die in Hit Points to the person the character chooses, if the spell is successful. This spell can be cast once per battle during the battle, and can only assist one person. It can be used once per person, succeed or fail, after each battle.

**INSPIRATION** gives you command over a battlefield. Every turn, on your turn, roll the die for this Ability. If the result is 5 or more, you and all of your allies get a +1 bonus to Fight die roll results when making an attack, until it is your turn in combat again. The bonus does not apply to damage rolls. You can make this roll before attacking, moving or taking any other action on your turn in a battle, but if you fail the roll (get a 4 or less), you cannot use this Ability again for the rest of the battle.

**LIGHTNING** (spell) does its die in damage divided as the character chooses among targets, if the spell is successful. Can be cast every turn. This spell can be used at a distance, and hits on an odd or even result above the enemy's Difficulty (roll once and check the result against each target's Difficulty).

**LUCK** allows you to add your die result to one of another person's rolls, before they make the roll, or reduce an opponent's roll by the same amount, before they make the roll. Can be used once per turn, on your turn. It can be used on attack rolls, rolls to cast spells, damage rolls or any other roll. It cannot be used on a roll you make.

**MAGIC SHIELD** (spell) protects a single person the character chooses (including the character). Roll the die for this Ability when the spell is successfully cast, then double the result to determine the number of points of damage the shield absorbs before disappearing. If this Mind Skill roll failed, you can try again, but once the spell works, it is used up for the rest of the battle.

**MARTIAL ARTS:** you don't carry a weapon that's a piece of equipment. You are a weapon. Add the die size of this Ability to every damage roll which uses the basic weapon damage d4 (do not roll a die for Martial Arts). The special ability is not used for attack rolls. For example, a character with Martial Arts at d6 would cause d4 +6 points of damage to an enemy he hits.

**MERCHANT:** you're better than most at making money. You know what to look for in a pile of treasure, and how to get the best deal in any kind of bargain. Your Money die is equal to your Merchant die, instead of a d4. You can also add this Ability die to a Mind Skill roll when you're dealing with money or valuable goods.

**MONSTER KNOWLEDGE** gives you an advantage over your enemies (if they're not of your own species). Pick one type of creature or monster rank (see below). Roll this die when making an attack roll and damage roll against that type of enemy. This Ability can also be used to negotiate with or research that type of enemy.

**RAGE** gives you the ability to lash out at all your enemies at once. Every enemy within reach of your weapon (in an adjacent space to you if you're using miniatures) is attacked by you, though you only have to make one attack roll. Roll this die and add it to your weapon damage when using a sword, axe or non-ranged weapon, or a natural weapon like a punch or animal bite. Can be used once per battle.

**SHAPE-CHANGING** (spell): you can magically transform into a real-world animal (like a rat, hawk or wolf) once per day. This spell is always automatically successful, but roll the die for this Ability and double the result. That's the maximum number of turns (in combat) and/or hours (outside of combat) you can stay in the animal form. You can communicate with other characters but strangers won't understand you. You cannot carry weapons, armor or other equipment.

**SWORD** or another hand weapon (axe, hammer, etc.) does its die in damage.

**TANGLE:** you have a tool or the power to wrap up your foes and keep them bound up. On a successful Fight result, roll your tangle die. The result is the number of turns one enemy is trapped and cannot act (unless it makes a Body Skill roll with a Difficulty equal to your tangle die result to break free).

**THIEVERY** makes you better at sneaking around, picking locks, and so on. Whenever you would roll your Body or Mind die to see if you succeed at such an action, roll your Thievery die too and add the results together.

**TRANSPORT:** you have a sailing ship, magic flying carpet, pet dragon or other means of transportation faster than a horse or your own two feet. It can carry the entire party. In difficult conditions (rough seas, trying to out-fly an enemy), use this Ability's die to determine if you triumph over the difficulty. If the transport makes an attack, shooting its cannons or slashing with its claws, use this Ability's die for the attack and damage.

**Hit Points:** There are two listings for Hit Points on the character sheet. Starting Hit Points are the character's maximum HP. A character begins with this number, and when healed, can never have more than this number. Current Hit Points is a space to keep track of HP when taking damage.

To determine a character's Starting Hit Points, add 10 + Body die size, so a starting character's Hit Points will be 14, 18 or 22.

**Basic Weapon:** The character sheet lists "basic weapon" with a damage of d4, which the character possesses no matter what. To have a bigger weapon, choose it as a d6 or d10 Ability. The player decides exactly what the basic weapon is. In a fantasy setting, for example, a basic weapon could be a dagger or staff, while in a modern setting the basic weapon could be a pistol (but you only hit on an even number above the target's Difficulty - see the Gun Ability above). It doesn't matter what the player calls it - the basic weapon could be a punch, a laser sword or even a belt-fed machine gun, but it will still only do d4 damage.

**Money:** This is handled very simply, unless you want to go through the trouble of collecting gold pieces or spending galactic credits (see other RPGs for ways to do this). All characters have a Money die size of d4, except characters with the Merchant Ability at d6 or d10. When a character wants to buy something cheap or common, the game master should allow it (unless it makes for a better story if the character *doesn't* have a common item - where's that rope when you need it?!). When a character wants to buy something that has a significant price or is rare, the player will have to make a roll using his character's Money die. The Difficulty is 2 or more, depending on the item. On a success, the character can have the item.

**Equipment:** All characters begin with whatever clothing and other adventuring gear the game master sees fit to give them (typically, the kind of stuff they'll need to do their job). There's no limit to the amount of equipment a character can have, but be reasonable about what the character possesses and can carry.

Valuable gear can bump up a Skill or Ability by one die size in situations where the gear would be useful. Your d4 Body Skill becomes d6, for example, when sneaking in magical Elven boots. A character can carry at most four items with die sizes assigned to them (for example, a crossbow using the bow Ability, those Elven boots, and two others).

**Experience:** See below.

### ***DOING THINGS IN THE GAME***

To attempt an action, the game master will tell you which Skill to use, and will decide on a Difficulty for the action (2 - Easy, 4 - Average, 6 - Hard, 8 - Very Hard). Roll your Skill die, and an Ability die if one is appropriate for the action you're attempting. If your total result is *equal to or greater than* the Difficulty, you succeed at the action. If it's *less than* the Difficulty, you fail.

**Combat:** First, each player rolls his character's Fight die, and the game master rolls the Fight die for each of his monsters. The character or monster with the highest result goes first (reroll ties).

Second, make an attack using whichever Skill and Ability fits the attack, usually Fight, or Mind to cast spells. The Difficulty of each monster is listed below. *The Difficulty for monsters to hit any character is 4.* At this time, the character can move, perform other actions, and so on, as long as the game master allows it. A character can only make one attack per turn.

Third, on a hit, roll the attack's damage, and subtract it from the enemy's Hit Points. Monsters are out of action (unconscious, dead, seriously wounded, or whatever is appropriate) when they fall to 0 (zero) Hit Points. Characters are unconscious at 0 (zero) HP, and dead for good at -5 HP.

*Helping each other out:* If one player tells the game master his character is trying something, and all the other characters try it too, add 1 to the die result of that first player's roll for each successful roll by another player. For example, say Bob the Warrior is searching a room, and his three buddies decide to search too. The game master says this is a Mind Skill roll, and he decides the Difficulty is 4. Bob rolls a 2 on his die, and his friends roll 6, 1 and 2. One friend succeeded at the roll (with a result of 6), so Bob gets to add 1 to his die result, for a total of 3. That's less than the Difficulty, so the group finds nothing, even with four people searching.

## **MONSTERS**

All enemies are called monsters, even if they're more like traps or just nasty people. They are found in five different ranks. Each rank provides a Fight die for the monster, a Difficulty to hit it, and typical Hit Points for that rank of monster. A few example monsters and their powers are listed. Monsters may be able to attack more than once per turn. Ranged monster attacks (like a gun or a dragon's fire breath) follow the same rules as the bow and gun Abilities (above) - they only hit on an even numbered result of 4 or more.

Very Weak: Fight d4, Difficulty 2, Hit Points 3

Bat: Bite 2 damage, flies  
Locked Door: Causes no damage, 4 Hit Points  
Rat, Spider: Bite 1 damage

Weak: Fight d6, Difficulty 2, Hit Points 6

Goblin, Bandit: Knife d6 damage, 8 Hit Points  
Rodent of Unusual Size, Guard Dog: Bite d4 damage  
Wolf: Bite d6 damage

Average: Fight d8, Difficulty 4, Hit Points 10

Giant Spider: Bite d4 damage and poison d4 damage per turn for 4 turns  
Infantry Soldier: Rifle d8 damage, Armor d6 armor  
Orc: Axe d6 damage  
Skeleton: Sword d8 damage, take half damage (round up) from blades, 4 Hit Points  
Swordsman: Sword d8 damage, Shield d4 armor  
Warlock: Magic Blast d8 damage  
Zombie: Claws d6 damage, take half damage (round up) from clubs and blunt weapons, 5 Hit Points

Tough: Fight d10, Difficulty 6, Hit Points 20

Bear: Claws d8 damage, Bite d10 damage  
War Robot: Fist d8 damage, Laser Blaster d10 damage, Armor d6 armor  
Young Dragon: Claws d6 damage, Bite d8 damage, Fire Breath d10 damage, Scales d6 armor, flies, 35 Hit Points

Very Tough: Fight d12, Difficulty 8, Hit Points 50

Arch-Mage: Two spells (choose from Abilities list) that are always available to the monster, immune to all damage except spells and magic weapons  
Dragon: Claws d8 damage, Bite d10 damage, Fire Breath d12 damage, Scales d8 armor, flies, 70 Hit Points  
Vampire: Bite d10 damage and regains Hit Points equal to damage it caused

Wraith: Death Touch d6 damage, Energy Drain d6 damage to Starting Hit Points and Current Hit Points, flies

### ***EXPERIENCE***

Every time a character accomplishes a task - succeeding at any kind of action or defeating a monster, for example - the character earns a number of Experience Points equal to the Difficulty of the task. Characters who team up to defeat a monster each earn Experience Points equal to the Difficulty of the monster. Characters who find treasure earn a number of Experience Points based on the value of the treasure, usually 1 or 2 Experience Points per character.

You can spend Experience Points between adventures to improve your character.

Add 1 to your Starting Hit Points: 20 Experience Points

Item offering +1 die size to a specific type of action (magic weapon, special tool, etc.): 50 Experience Points

Increase one Ability one die size: 75 Experience Points (to a maximum of d12)

Add a new Ability at die size d6: 100 Experience Points (you can have any number of Abilities, but only carry four things that have die sizes, since some Abilities like Gun and Sword are items)

Increase one Skill one die size: 100 Experience Points (to a maximum of d12)

### ***MOVEMENT***

If you are using miniature figures and battle maps from other RPGs, each human-size figure moves 30 feet (six spaces) per turn. Spells, bows, guns and other ranged attacks have a maximum distance of 100 feet (20 spaces). You can even account for cover and difficult terrain, if you want to make this simple game more complex.

### ***CHARACTER CONCEPTS***

Here's how to recreate the classes from the world's most popular fantasy roleplaying game (both 3.5 and 4 editions). Each suggests which Skill should get the d12, and two Abilities.

Barbarian: Fight, Rage, Sword

Ranger: Fight, Bow, Monster Knowledge

Bard: Body, Charisma, Inspiration

Rogue: Body, Sword, Thievery

Cleric: Mind, Healing, Luck

Sorcerer: Mind, Dazzle, Luck

Druid: Mind, Lightning, Shape-Changing

Wizard: Mind, Magic Shield, Fireball

Fighter: Fight, Armor, Sword

Warlock: Mind, Fireball, Lightning

Monk: Body, Luck, Martial Arts

Warlord: Fight, Inspiration, Sword

Paladin: Fight, Healing, Sword

# ADVENTURE SQUAD Character Sheet

Name:

Player:

Concept:

Race:

SKILLS	Die Size
Body	
Fight	
Mind	

ABILITIES	Die Size

	Die Size
Basic Weapon	d4
Money	

Equipment:

Starting Hit Points

Current Hit Points

Experience Points