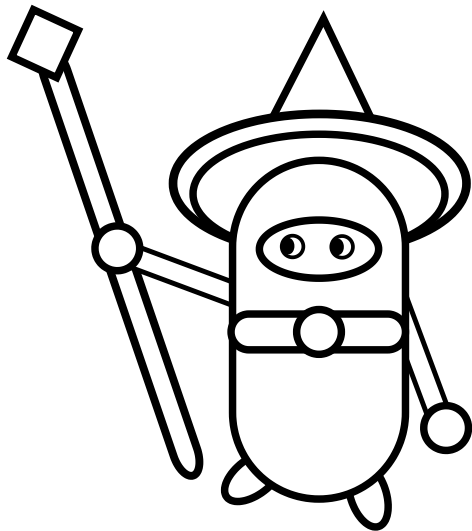


Gamebooks & Goonies



a rule system for choice-based adventures

No Time To Play, 2021

Game structure

A book or computer program presents the player with various situations, by way of text, illustrations

or the like. The player picks what their character would do at any point from a series of choices.

Success and failure

The outcome of a choice may depend on the player character's abilities, and chance. Tricky situations are given a Difficulty Score (DS). Roll two six-sided dice (2d6) and add the relevant ability score. If the total is greater than the DS, it's a success. A tie can be a partial success, or have other consequences.

Failure always has consequences. If nothing else, the player character (PC) takes damage equal to the margin of failure. Recommended difficulty scores:

Easy	7-8
Medium	9-10
Hard	11-12

Abilities

Any PC has three abilities: Power, Grace and Focus. The names are for flavor. You may call them Might,

Mischief and Magic, or even Brute, Skulker and Erudite.

The PC also has Health Points (HP). If damage ever adds up to their HP total or more, then the PC is out of the fight and can't continue.

PCs can also learn and use magic. They must be able to do a little of everything.

Character creation

Players start with three points they can put in any of their character's attribute scores. They also start with 10 health points and no experience.

Characters also have equipment. They start with 2 rations, suitable clothing or armor and a weapon or tool. Best to give the player a few presets to pick from.

(Weapons have Damage Points. Armor has a Protection Score. Rations heal damage.)

Archetypes

Fighter: +2 Power, +1 Grace, 0 Focus

Weapon: +1 mace; Armor: +3 chain mail

Starts with +1 health points but no spells.

Rogue: 0 Power, +2 Grace, +1 Focus

Weapon: +3 rapier; Armor: +2 leather jerkin

Starts with one low-level spell.

Mage: 0 Power, +1 Grace, +2 Focus

Weapon: +2 staff; Armor: +1 robes

Starts with -1 health points and two spells.

Combat

Enemies only have a difficulty score (and no attributes). To attack normally:

1. Roll 2d6 + Power; interpret the result as explained in Success and Failure.
2. On success, deal damage equal to the margin of success + the weapon's points.
3. Armor soaks up damage equal to its protection score, but only if the PC was going to take more damage than that. This is to keep fights from stalling.
4. Enemies are defeated when damage taken equals or exceeds their DS.

5. Enemies can also have weapons, but armor makes them too tough.

If it looks like a losing fight, the PC can also try to run:

1. Roll 2d6 + Grace; interpret the result as explained in Success and Failure.
2. On success, the PC safely got away from the enemy; the fight is over.
3. On failure, the PC takes damage as above.

Last but not least, any PC can also try to use magic in combat or other sticky situations, if available.

Magic

Characters gain spells in the form of scrolls and such. Once they know a spell, they can cast it at will. No need to roll dice unless it's a tricky situation.

To cast: roll 2d6, add Focus and subtract the spell level. If the result beats the current difficulty score, the spell succeeds. Otherwise it backfires, with consequences to the caster. On a tie, success is only partial and/or has a cost.

Note: this system makes life hard for magic users and should be redesigned.

Spell examples

Sunburst (level 1): causes a brilliant flare of sunlight to appear briefly within a small radius in front of the caster. Enemies caught in it are stunned unless immune and have their difficulty score reduced by the margin of success.

Failure means the caster is caught in their own spell and takes damage (from the enemy) equal to the margin of failure.

Smoke screen (level 1): makes thick plumes of smoke burst from the caster's fingers and spread in a small radius ahead. It has effects similar to Sunburst.

Cold snap (level 1): causes a rapid drop in temperature to freezing levels within a small radius in front of the caster. It stuns like Sunburst or Smoke Screen, except it also causes ice to form, creating bridges or slippery ground.

Undergrowth (level 2): calls forth many strong vines that grow quickly from any kind of ground in a small area ahead of the caster. They can entrap

enemies, reducing their DS as per the previous spells, or else form thickets and ladders.

Windstorm (level 2): invokes a high wind that lasts for a good moment, blowing in the direction faced by the caster. It blows dust into the air and is strong enough to knock some creatures off their feet, or impede flight.

Rest and healing

Whenever player characters have some downtime, they can rest instead of doing something else. A good rest heals 3 points of damage if they also have a ration to eat, or 1 point otherwise.

Character advancement

Over the course of a game, player characters should advance, becoming able to tackle new, bigger challenges.

To "level up", give the character +1 Health Points, and +1 in an attribute of the player's choice.

To figure out when a character should advance, you can keep track of experience.

- For each obstacle overcome and enemy defeated, grant Experience Points (XP) equal to its initial difficulty score.
- Successfully running from an enemy should earn XP equal to the margin of success, or the current DS if that slows down advancement too much.

Keep track of used versus unused experience. "Level up" at these thresholds:

Used XP	Advance every
< 100	35 XP
< 250	50 XP
< 500	85 XP

Expand the progression as needed.

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Based on [Tunnel Goons](#), by Nate Treme.