

BALDMAN GAMES ORGANIZED PLAY

Welcome to the organized play document for Baldman Games. Our goal is to bring fun adventures and campaigns to players while promoting the games and styles of play we ourselves love.

All of our campaigns are based in 4th edition *Dungeons and Dragons*. Though we create adventures that play in that system for us to run at shows we attend, we are not making adventures for sale, download, or distribution. This is something we are doing at shows we run and support through our network of judges. All adventures are owned by their collective authors and may not be used without their permission and the campaigns sign-off.

Current Campaigns

Ashes of Athas (Dark Sun Themed)

General Rules

Regardless of the campaign there are certain rules that apply. From table formation to etiquette, they are all covered here.

Things are handled at Shows

If it needs to be done it is done at a show. We will not email adventures, story awards, or certificates to anyone. So for players and judges alike, please make sure when you are done at the table that you have everything you need.

Table Size

Table size for all Baldman Games campaigns is 4 to 6 players and a single judge. This gives the optimal play experience for the players and helps our authors get the challenge levels as close to accurate as we can.

Table Tracking

Table tracking forms will be provided at each show a game runs by HQ. Please make sure to fill these out as it is our only way of tracking play numbers. We will eventually have membership numbers to go with these.

Playing Again

All adventures can be played multiple times, as long as you use a different character each time you play. You can also DM an adventure, and then play it at a later date. If you play an adventure you have DM'ed or played before, you must tell the DM so before the start

of the game. Don't ruin the surprises for anyone else that might be playing the adventure for the first time.

Judge Credit

A judge who has ran an adventure before playing it and does not feel like playing it afterwards may take credit for playing it one time for a single character. He may take the standard rewards as listed in the adventure and apply them to a character he owns. This decision needs to be made at the time he is judging so HQ can provide him with the proper paperwork.

Play Etiquette

Here are some play customs that are helpful to keep in mind while playing.

Roleplay

It's all about fun and immersion, and you help create that with how you play your character. Speak in character when you can, and let people know when you're out of character. Use campaign specific jargon, such as race names in Dark Sun (dray, half-giant), if you know it. Keep any knowledge you have about the setting to yourself, unless your character knows the same information. And most of all, try to do cool stuff with your character capabilities and environment when you can.

Team Play

The D&D game focuses on a team of specialists working together to overcome challenges. Game mechanics reinforce that focus. Remember that—especially given the campaign background—assisting your cohorts is important.

Accentuating Fun: You are as responsible for fun as the DM and other players are. Be the player everyone else want to play with. Try cool stunts and play up the interactions between your character and NPCs, including enemies. Emphasize the fun.

Considering Companions: To use a power that targets another player's character, you must have that player's permission to target the character. If the player refuses to allow the character to be a target, respect those wishes. This situation includes beneficial effects another player refuses.

Helping Others: Roleplay your character as you like, but remember that it's poor form to do so in a way that endangers the group or another character. This situation includes revealing, without agreement from

other players, information that might cause suspicion or attack.

Supporting the DM: Your DM is volunteering time and trying to make the game as fun as possible. Make the DM's job easy by tolerating rulings with which you disagree, as well as supporting rulings that keep the game fast-paced and fun. Keep the books and D&D Compendium closed, if you can, and save rules discussion for after the game.

Judges

Being an DM is only a little different from DMing for a group of friends. This section tells you what you need to know.

Rule One: Fun

Gaming is a shared experience, and it is meant, primarily, to be fun.

Play Cinematically

If a player wants to try a cinematic stunt, try to allow it. Encourage players to act the part of action heroes in fantasy movies. Tell them that they can break minor rules with successful stunts. For example, you might allow a character to cut the corner of blocking terrain by making a successful moderate DC Athletics or Acrobatics check. You might allow a character trained in Acrobatics to stand up as a minor action with a successful hard Acrobatics check. The worst that can happen is that the character is forced to follow a minor rule, but the best is a lot of cool action.

Remember, also, that whatever is good for the characters is good for their foes. Using opponents as examples, you can show players what their characters might try. Make it clear that the creature is using a skill rather than a power.

Ham It Up

Players remember games in which the DM portrayed unforgettable scenes, characters, and monsters. Statistics and rules matter little in such perceptions. Therefore, give personality to your encounters, characters, and monsters. Give the impression of a scene, along with its important features. Make your NPCs talk some smack and your bestial monsters growl. Play creatures as efficiently as their intelligence might dictate, but remember that even the most brilliant tactician can make a mistake.

Own It

When the rules or adventure parameters aren't clear enough, improvise. If something in the adventure needs adaptation or changing to player actions, do what needs to be done. Work with the players to make

the game as enjoyable as possible while retaining the structure, challenges, and story each adventure presents.

Worry Not

When the rules or adventure parameters leave something unclear, improvise with an eye toward increasing the game's fun. Avoid referencing the rules during play. Fun is more important than strict rules application.

Challenge Level

D&D is a brutal world. Monsters deal significant damage, and encounters can feature situations that challenge players to make good choices rather than relying solely on character capabilities. *Our campaign* adventures state the desired challenge level, and each encounter has advice for modifying the difficulty. For example, an encounter might be intentionally easy. Make changes during the adventure to achieve that level of difficulty for your group. The D&D game has a DM for a reason. Achieve the feel you're after with your players' characters and current circumstances in mind.

Changing Monsters: If you feel the need, level monsters up or down, which is often as easy as ± 1 to statistics (attack bonus, defenses, and damage) and ± 8 hp per level. Increase or decrease the frequency of recharging powers. Make monsters drop before they reach 0 hp, or keep them alive a round longer. You can even remove or add monsters if the situation and fun warrant it.

Changing Tactics: Bestial monsters are not efficient fighters, and smart creatures make mistakes, ignoring a mark or provoking opportunity attacks, due to strained emotions or lack of complete perspective. Clever monsters flee or surrender to escape with their lives. Overconfidence might cause an NPC to announce intentions, and it could cause a monster to ignore a character whom it shouldn't ignore. Keep all these options in mind, and change tactics as you think the circumstances and excitement might warrant.

Circumstantial Boon: Sometimes the characters find themselves low on surges and powers despite their best efforts. You can provide a needed boost by placing something in the characters' path or in the encounter. For example, you might add an energy node (*Dungeon Master's Guide 2*, page 59), healing ground (page 60), or pillar of life (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 68) to an encounter in which you know the characters will need some help. The healing ground or pillar of life might restore a healing surge or two instead of or in addition to providing healing.

Strong Group

You have six players, or the players are experienced D&D players who prefer tougher challenges. Add one of the simplest (skirmisher, brute, or soldier preferred) non-minion monsters among those in the encounter whose level most closely matches the character level. You can add a number of minions equal to one monster if you prefer.

Weak Group

You have four players, or the players are new D&D players. Subtract from the encounter one of the least important nonminion monsters whose level most closely matches the character level. You can subtract a number of minions equal to one monster if you prefer.

Changeable Group

As DM, you'll run different groups through different stages of their progress through the adventures. Some players might be new, and others might have played earlier adventures with a different DM. At each session, summarize or recruit another player to summarize what has come before for those who need an update.

If a decision in an earlier adventure has ramifications in the current one, find out how the decision worked out for most players. Go with what happened for that majority. If your survey produces no majority, choose the result that is most positive for the characters. Inform the players what this portion of the adventure assumes.