

# AdventureLand

A fantasy role-playing game for advanced role-players  
by Björn Janßen

## Introduction

AdventureLand is a blessed land. Ruled by wise king Justbert III. the citizen enjoy an unprecedented age of prosperity and peace. And all this is owed to the Adventurer's Guild established by Justbert III's great-grandfather Justbert I. to quell the growing monster threat. The Guild collects reports of monster movements, monster lairs, dark caves, dungeons, and more. Whenever the Guild identifies a threat, they send out an adventurer party to examine the threat, and if possible, eliminate it.

You are one of the brave adventurers and together with your party you seek and destroy monsters.

## Character Generation

Every character has four attributes: Fighter, Cleric, Magic-User, and Thief.

Distribute four (4) points among these attributes as you see fit.

Every character has two derived attributes: Health and Defense. Health is always 10 + your level in Fighter. Defense is always equal to your lowest attribute.

You start with a one-handed weapon and simple cloth on your body.

## Doing Stuff

To do stuff, describe your goal and roll 2d6 and add the level of a salient attribute. If your total is 10 or higher, you succeed. Otherwise, you fail. There can be further modifiers if the Cliché Master (CM) deems this necessary.

Sometimes you will find expressions in the rules like "roll Thief". This just means that the salient attribute in this context is Thief.

## Combat

Combat is conducted in rounds.

In a round, all player characters go first in no particular order, then all non-player characters go in no particular order. After each character has taken his turn, a new round starts. Combat can end because of many reasons, most often because one side is victorious and the other side is defeated. But fleeing or realizing how dangerous and stupid fighting is are common, too.

## Turn

On a character's turn, the character may Attack, Move, Cast, Heal or do other stuff.

**Attack:** The stuff you do here is swing, stab or shoot your weapon at an opponent. Attacks use the Fighter attribute.

Melee weapons can only be used against nearby opponents. Ranged weapons can be used against far away opponents, but have a maximum range that cannot be exceeded. Within this range you do not suffer extra penalties for distance. The Challenge Rating (or Defense in case of PCs) of your opponent is a negative modifier to your attack roll. If you connect, you do damage. Otherwise, nothing happens.

**Move:** The stuff you do here is to use your feet and legs to move. Every character can move up to 5m per turn without a roll. To move an additional 5m, roll Thief.

**Cast:** The stuff you do here is wiggle your fingers and mumble pig Latin to send fiery death to your opponent. Or whatever. Use Magic-User to cast spells.

Any character can cast spells, provided the character has levels in Magic-User.

Spells have a maximum range of "line of sight" -- if you can see it, you can hit it.

A spell may cause at most as many d6 of damage as the casters level in Magic-User is, but spell casting suffers a modifier of -2 for each d6 of potential damage. Just like any other attack spell casting is also modified by the CR of the target. If you succeed, you cause damage. Otherwise, you loose 1 point of health for every d6 of damage you wanted to cause!

**Heal:** The stuff you do here is to touch the target of your efforts and pray to your god and, hopefully, heal the target. Use Cleric to heal someone.

Any character can heal, provided the character has levels in Cleric. The healer must touch the target of his efforts and can heal at most as many d6 of Health as the healers level in Cleric is and the roll suffers a negative modifier equal to the number of Health the target has lost. If you succeed, you heal the target.

Otherwise, you don't and may not try to heal the target again in this combat.

**Do other stuff:** You can do whatever you like during combat, e. g. pick a lock or throw a rope, provided the CM agrees. Probably the CM will tell you what to do,

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## Notes

Here it is, my first publicly available role-playing game. It harks back to the simpler days of yore and as such it is limited in scope, easy to understand, flawed in many ways, incomplete, and, hopefully, fun. The moniker "for advanced role-players" is just a flimsy excuse to not explain basic role-playing concepts.

The first draft of this game is available under the name "Clichés & Unicorns" in a [post](#) on rpg.net. I liked the concept and typed up the rest in a few hours. It is very much stream-of-consciousness-like and this PDF is just a simple export of the Microsoft OneNote page I used to collect my ideas. The license of this work is [CC-BY 3.0 Germany](#).

You can write me an e-mail to: [bjoern.janssen<at>googlemail.com](mailto:bjoern.janssen@googlemail.com)

## Spell Casting Out-of-Combat

That's crazy talk! But if you insist on using magic to do other things than to destroy stuff, I won't stop you.

Magic is the disruption of the fabric of reality, which makes destroying things with magic rather easy. Disrupt the fabric hard and fast enough and things go "poof". The Universe doesn't like reality to be disrupted and quickly fixes the damaged fabric in a least-effort method and turns back to what it was doing before.

Now, changing or even creating things would require the spell-caster to tear the fabric, change it to something new and quickly patch the fabric by himself before the Universe notices.

This is incredibly hard to do! Not only do you have to surgically open the fabric -- just blasting a hole in it won't do this time! -- you must know how things look in "source code" to make them compatible and patch them into the fabric and then you must fix the fabric. The good news are, it doesn't matter what you try to do, creating a ton of gold from thin air is just as difficult as speed-growing your hair.

but your input is appreciated.

### Damage and Consequences

If you cause damage, the CM will apply the damage to the monster's hit points. If a PC suffers damage, reduce the result by the PC's armor protection and subtract the remainder from his Health. If Health drops below 0 (zero) the PC is defeated and falls down. No further actions are possible. If your party wins the combat, your PC will regain consciousness and immediately recover to half of his Health. Otherwise it's slavery or worse!

### Magic Damage

Spells do variable damage; magic users may cause up to 1d6 of damage per level in Magic-User.

And unlike normal weapon damage, magic damage carries over to other opponents if the attack causes more damage than a single opponent can take. The spell-caster must be able to draw a line of sight to the other victims, too.

### Weapons, Armor, Equipment in general

All one-handed weapons do 1d6 + Fighter damage and cost 100 gold pieces.

All two-handed weapons do 2d6 + Fighter damage and cost 200 gold pieces.

Thrown weapons do 1d6 damage and cost 20 gold pieces each.

Other ranged weapons do 1d6 + Thief, have an unlimited supply of projectiles and cost 300 gold pieces.

Armor reduces damage per point of protection. There is a great variety of armor available and you can buy many different pieces, like helmets, bracers, hoods, breastplates and so on. Armor costs 100gp per point of protection offered. A PC cannot wear more points of protection than his level in Fighter is.

Small shields add 1 to the PC's Defense and cost 100 gold pieces.

Large shields add 3 to the PC's Defense and cost 300 gold pieces.

There aren't any medium shields.

Other equipment is of minor importance. If in doubt whether a party has some special equipment available, roll for it with an appropriate attribute, e. g. for a rope roll Thief, for a cooking pot roll Cleric, etc.

### Magic Items

There are plenty of magic items. The most common give a plain bonus to an attribute, such as "magic sword +1 Fighter" or "orb of power +5 Magic-User". A magic item is worth 500 gold pieces plus the bonus \* 100 in gold pieces plus the normal cost, e. g. a great bow +11 Thief would cost 500+1100+300 = 1900 gold pieces.

### Creating Magic Items

Magic items are actually not really magic, but accidents. See, the Universe is a Platonist and somewhere stores blueprints or templates for all things in existence -- and even for some things not in existence -- and instantiates one token according to the template, if a new whatever is needed. Since the Universe is quite busy expanding, fixing holes in the fabric of the reality (damn you, spell-casters), running time and so on, it usually deploys tokens with a best-effort practice that unkind philosophers of the Laberheim academy have dubbed "least-effort principle". In other words, more often than not, the Universe does only a slapdash job.

But sometimes, nobody knows why, the Universe does an OK or even excellent job! In these not too common instances the token instantiated is of superior, if not supreme, quality. The sentients crawling around inside the Universe call these examples of superior quality "magic". Of course, nobody can predict or even influence when a token will be of superior quality, so don't believe the quacks who claim they can manufacture magic items.

### Experience

Experience and advancement is measured in gold pieces. As a rule of thumb a character should be able to collect 100-200 gold pieces in a single session.

To raise an attribute pay the new level \* 100 in gold pieces. Of course you cannot skip levels. The CM should also require and provide an opportunity to spend the money before allowing the level increase.

### Monsters

Each monster has a Challenge Rating (CR) as its single attribute. CR does all the things the different attributes of a PC do, which makes it easy for the CM to

Rules-wise the CM will roll three dice and built the largest number from the result she can. For example, she rolls 3, 2, and 5. The largest number therefore is 532. This is the target number, which the caster must hit on the spot with his damage dice, go over or under and you fail. A failed roll causes damage to the caster as usual; loose 1 point of health per die.

It's easy to see, why this is rarely attempted: you must be a accomplished spell-caster, easily in the hundreds of levels of magic-user, you better be a good warrior, too, to survive the likely backlash, and who has the hundreds of d6 needed here?

### Sample Monsters

**Kobold (1):** A shriveled and nasty denizen of dark places. Can be found everywhere, forests, dungeons, cities, everywhere.

**Goblin (3):** A small ape-like creature with bad breath, furry ears and a bad attitude. It likes to stab people from behind.

**Special: Ambush!** Goblins like to ambush people. In the first combat round a goblin may ambush a PC, gaining +2 to its attack roll and damage! The PC must roll Thief to avoid the ambush.

**Zombie (5):** A mindless, shambling monster. No wonder, it's dead already! It is drawn to any living being, preferably sentient, and tries to munch on it.

**Special: Undead!** These undead are slow and stupid. Therefore the CR of the monster is not applied as a negative modifier to any attack or spell roll. But these undead are really hard to stop anyway. You must cause CR of damage in a single attack to dispatch an undead.

**Orc (10):** Brutish brutes that most often come in brute squads. Orcs like hurting people and collect used weapons and armor.

**Special: Brute Squad!** Orcs are most effective when in large groups. If a two or more Orcs attack the same target in a round, they gain +2 on the attack roll.

**Giant Spider (12):** Ugly, huge eight-legged freaks with black hair everywhere and lots of eyes. They hunt everything smaller than them, which is to say almost everything. They prefer cows but won't snuff at humans, either. Beware, they can shoot sticky patches of web from their abdomen!

**Special: Entanglement!** The web of the spider can entangle your PC and make him helpless. A spider may choose to shoot a patch at you instead of biting. If it hits, you are entangled unless you make a Thief

juggle many monsters.

All rolls done for the monster use the CR as a positive modifier, all rolls against the monster use the CR as a negative modifier. The CR is also used to calculate damage, for all monsters do  $1d6+CR$  damage. Finally, the CR is the Health of the monster, too!

The CR is given in brackets directly next to the monster's name. Some monsters have special abilities that are explained in the monster entry. See the sidebar for a few sample monsters.

### Treasure

Of course, monsters carry unreasonable amounts of treasure with them at all times, so monster-slaying adventurers have a ready source of income. The amount of gold pieces a monster carries is, you guessed it, equal to the CR of the monster.

### Challenges

You can use the CR to roughly calculate an appropriate encounter. As a rule of thumb the CR of a monster in an encounter should not exceed the Defense of the weakest character by more than a few points.

### An Example

Aron and Bob are two young, fresh and brash adventurers exploring a dark cave. Aron has focused on martial prowess and has the following attributes: Fighter 3 Cleric 1 MU 0 Thief 0. Bob on the other hand is more cerebral and has focused on magic, his attributes are Fighter 0 Cleric 0 MU 4 Thief 0. Thus Aron has 13 Health and Bob has 10 and both have Defense 0. Aron wields a simple one-handed sword while Bob carries a big stick he affectingly calls "mage staff". Aron is dressed in a loincloth to show off his muscles and Bob wears a star-spangled robe, but both outfits count as cloths with zero protection.

Now, in AdventureLand dark caves are usually home to kobolds, and so it is! Eight of the gnarly cave dwellers snarl and hiss and try to evict the adventurers with kicks to the shin. The CM declares combat, sorry, COM-BAAAAAT!

As by the rules, Aron and Bob go first. The CM ruled that all kobolds are in close range and can be attacked this round. After a short but severe beating Bob agrees to go first. He casts a spell against one of the kobolds, Death Pinky! The target is in Bob's line of sight, so no problem here. Bob also knows about the fragile nature of kobolds and thus only wants to cause 1d6 damage. This amounts to a modifier of +1 (-2 for the 1d6 damage, -1 for the CR, +4 for the 4 levels of MU). He rolls two six-sided die and adds up. Phew, a 9. Add the +1 and you get 10, a success! The damage roll results in a 3. Kobolds have 1 hit point each, so the first kobold is croaked in a small flame of pink fire! But magic damage carries over and there are still 2 points of damage remaining. With terror the kobolds must realize that they bit off more than they can chew -- suddenly the pink flames jump to another kobold, who dies in painful agony (1 point of damage), but still the magic fire carves a path of destruction through the damp cave. A third, and last, kobold is engulfed in flames and dies shrieking.

Encouraged, Aron strikes! He attacks a nearby kobold and has +2 modifier to his roll (-1 CR, +3 Fighter). He rolls a total of 6, therefore the end result is 8, a miss. Now it's the remaining kobolds' turn.

Kobold number 4 gnaws at Bobs ankle. Bob has a Defense of 0 therefore the attack roll is only modified by +1 (the CR of the kobold). Incredible enough, the kobold hits and causes  $1d6+1$  points of damage. The CM rolls a 6 and the kobold causes 7 points of damage. Argh, that's one tough critter! Bob wears no armor, therefore must subtract 7 points from his Health. Ouch!

Out of the other four kobolds, only one hits and Aron suffers 4 points of damage. Thus the combat round is over and a new round begins.

Again Bob summons the destructive power of magic for 1d6, but this time the spell fails and Bob loses a point of Health. Bob now has only 2 Health left. Aron, however, smashes his sword through the skull of one kobold, who dies silent in horrid pain. The second round is not kind to the kobolds, who fail to hit the adventurers even once. So begins the third round.

This time Aron kills a kobold by driving his heavy boot into the lower abdomen of the monster. The monster dies gargling its own blood. Bob tries to unleash the forces of magic for 1d damage again and succeeds. The rolled damage is 5 and the remaining three kobolds are roasted in eldritch fire before their bodies are sucked out of reality with an audible \*plop\*. Smiling Aron rummages through the remains of the kobolds and finds 8 pieces of gold. He gives Bob his share and takes a deep breath. Now the entrance is clear but who knows what awaits the adventurers deep down there?

roll with the spider's CR as negative modifier. Entangled characters can't do shit until freed by another character. Just do other stuff on the entangled character, no roll required.

**Ghoul (25):** A smart and vicious undead. Like his dumber cousins it is drawn to living beings and wants to munch on tasty brain flesh.

**Special: Undeader!** Unlike other undead, a ghoul is smart and often only feigns death. Whenever a ghoul goes down, the CM rolls a d6. On a 6 the ghoul is only feigning death and will rise again at an opportune moment.

**Special: Poison!** Ghouls have poor mouth hygiene and still like to bite other people! They are like cats in this regard and equally dangerous. If your PC receives damage from a ghoul you must immediately roll Cleric or suffer the same amount of damage again.



The combat is over and Bob immediately recovers to half his Health, so he now has 5 Health. Aron only lost 4 points and since 9 is higher than 7 (half of Aron's Health), he recovers no Health points.

#### **Glossary**

**CM or cliché master:** the player who facilitates the game and must make all the tough decisions.

**PC or player character:** A character controlled by a player.

**NPC:** a character controlled by the CM.

**GP or gp:** a gold piece