

GAME MASTER'S TOOLBOX



CRITICAL HITS FOR PLAYERS

INSTRUCTIONS

When a member of the party rolls a natural 20 on an attack roll against an enemy, roll a d100 to select a table. Each table has four entries for different damage types; slashing, piercing, bludgeoning, and magic.

Each table also has a severity level in the left hand column; Setback, Dangerous, Life-Threatening, or Deadly. We would recommend using only Setback results at level 1. Dangerous results are appropriate from level 5, Life-Threatening from level 9, and Deadly from level 13. Of course, you can choose to play with all the tables from level 1; just don't be surprised if the GM has to add a few extra monsters to compensate...

These tables are intended to enhance the characters' stories, and

some carry long term, or even permanent effects. Where an end point is not specified for an effect, it is up to the GM how to end the effect, or even if it can be ended at all. Indeed, setting out to do so could be the seed of an adventure in itself.

If an effect would not make sense in the specific situation, simply ignore the result and roll again, or default to double damage as the effect for speed of play.

For creatures who would normally roll extra dice on a critical hit (such as half-orcs and barbarians), roll a d100 the same number of times, and choose one result to play.

When using these cards, 'you' refers to the player character who scored the hit.

	d100	Table
Setback	1-2	Table 1
	3-4	Table 2
	5-6	Table 3
	7-8	Table 4
	9-10	Table 5
	11-12	Table 6
	13-14	Table 7
	15-16	Table 8
	17-18	Table 9
	19-20	Table 10
	21-22	Table 11
	23-24	Table 12
	25-26	Table 13
	27-28	Table 14
	29-30	Table 15
	31-32	Table 16
Dangerous	33-34	Table 17
	35-36	Table 18
	37-38	Table 19
	39-40	Table 20
	41-42	Table 21
	43-44	Table 22
	45-46	Table 23
	47-48	Table 24
	49-50	Table 25

Dangerous	51-52	Table 26
	53-54	Table 27
	55-56	Table 28
	57-58	Table 29
	59-60	Table 30
Life-Threatening	61-62	Table 31
	63-64	Table 32
	65-66	Table 33
	67-68	Table 34
	69-70	Table 35
	71-72	Table 36
	73-74	Table 37
	75-76	Table 38
	77-78	Table 39
	79-80	Table 40
Deadly	81-82	Table 41
	83-84	Table 42
	85-86	Table 43
	87-88	Table 44
	89-90	Table 45
	91-92	Table 46
	93-94	Table 47
	95-96	Table 48
	97-98	Table 49
	99-100	Table 50



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TABLE 1

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Brow slash. Double damage, and the target is blinded until the end of its next turn.
Piercing	Pierced ear. Maximum damage.
Bludgeoning	Bashed nose. Double damage.
Magical	Magical barrage. Maximum damage, and an additional target within range is affected at half potency, or the spell's area of effect is increased by 5 ft.

TABLE 2

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Terrifying slash. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is frightened of you until the end of its next turn.
Piercing	With a sharp stick. Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target loses an eye (GM decides which one).
Bludgeoning	Bonk on the noggin. Maximum damage.
Magical	Spell storm. Double damage.

TABLE 3

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slice to the cheek. Double damage.
Piercing	Right in the kisser. Maximum damage, and the target cannot speak for 1d4 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Nighty night! Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked unconscious.
Magical	Impact. Maximum damage.

TABLE 4

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Bloodied nose. Maximum damage.
Piercing	Neck wound. Double damage.
Bludgeoning	Stunning blow. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is stunned.
Magical	Spell drain. Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 saving throw using its spellcasting ability. On a failed save, the target is unable to cast spells on its next turn.

TABLE 5

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Vexing cut. Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target cannot take reactions until the end of your next turn.
Piercing	Between the shoulders. Maximum damage.
Bludgeoning	Gut punch. Double damage.
Magical	Guiding attack. Maximum damage, and the target has disadvantage on saving throws against your spells for 1d4 rounds.

TABLE 6

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Follow-up. Maximum damage, and you may make another attack against the same target.
Piercing	Press the advantage. Double damage and, if this was a melee attack, you can make a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check to increase this to triple damage.
Bludgeoning	Winded. Maximum damage.
Magical	Bombardment. Double damage.

TABLE 7

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Nave to chops. Double damage.
Piercing	Follow-up. Maximum damage, and you may make another attack with disadvantage against the same target.
Bludgeoning	Soften 'em up. Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on saving throws until the end of their next turn.
Magical	Precise magic. Maximum damage.

TABLE 8

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slash to the ribs. Maximum damage.
Piercing	Poke in the belly. Double damage.
Bludgeoning	Get back! Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is pushed back 5 ft.
Magical	Terrifying display. Double damage, and all enemies that can see you must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, they are frightened of you until the end of your next turn.

TABLE 9

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Sliced tendon. Double damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 1/2 until the end of the target's next turn.
Piercing	In the knee. Maximum damage.
Bludgeoning	Low blow. Double damage.
Magical	Surge of power. Maximum damage, and you can immediately cast the same spell against the same target, expending a spell slot as normal.

TABLE 10

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Sweep the legs. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone.
Piercing	Pinned. Double damage, and the target is pinned to the ground and becomes restrained.
Bludgeoning	Shin bash. Maximum damage.
Magical	Blast of power. Double damage.

TABLE 11

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Calf slash. Double damage.
Piercing	Target practice. Maximum damage, and any enemy of the target within range may make an attack of opportunity with disadvantage against it.
Bludgeoning	...And stay down. Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone.
Magical	Targeted spell. Maximum damage.

TABLE 12

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Low slash. Maximum damage.
Piercing	Pierced thigh. Double damage.
Bludgeoning	Something slipped. Maximum damage, and the target's AC is reduced by 1d4 until the end of its next turn.
Magical	Big boom. Double damage. If this attack deals force or thunder damage: the target is pushed back 1d4 × 5 ft. if it is Large or smaller, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 5 ft. traveled.

TABLE 13

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slow recovery. Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target can make one less attack on their next turn.
Piercing	Shoulder jab. Maximum damage.
Bludgeoning	Rap on the knuckles. Double damage.
Magical	Resistance is futile. Maximum damage and, if the target is resistant to this damage type, it loses that resistance for 1 minute.

TABLE 14

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	You get what you pay for. Maximum damage, and you and the target must make a contested Strength check. If the target loses, their weapon is partially broken and deals 1/2 damage until it is repaired.
Piercing	Distracting jab. Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on their next attack.
Bludgeoning	Battered shoulder. Maximum damage.
Magical	Eruption. Double damage.

TABLE 15

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Forearm blow. Double damage.
Piercing	Find an opening. Maximum damage, and you have advantage on your next attack against the target.
Bludgeoning	Drop it! Double damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Strength or Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target drops what they are holding (GM decides which hand, or determines randomly).
Magical	Onslaught. Maximum damage.

TABLE 16

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slashed shoulder. Maximum damage.
Piercing	Pierced hand. Double damage.
Bludgeoning	Bruised joints. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on its next melee attack.
Magical	Didn't want it anyway... Double damage, and a non-magical item the target is holding or wearing is also affected by the damage type of the spell.

TABLE 17

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Brow slash. Triple damage, and the target is blinded for 1d4 + 1 rounds.
Piercing	Pierced ear. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Bludgeoning	Bashed nose. Triple damage.
Magical	Magical barrage. Maximum damage, and 2 additional targets within range are affected at half potency, or the spell's area of effect is increased by 10 ft.

TABLE 18

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Terrifying slash. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is frightened of you for 2d4 rounds.
Piercing	With a sharp stick. Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target loses an eye (GM decides which one).
Bludgeoning	Bonk on the noggin. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Magical	Spell storm. Triple damage.

TABLE 19

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slice to the cheek. Triple damage.
Piercing	Right in the kisser. Maximum damage, and the target cannot speak for 2d4 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Nighty night! Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked unconscious.
Magical	Impact. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.

TABLE 20

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Bloodied nose. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Piercing	Neck wound. Triple damage.
Bludgeoning	Stunning blow. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is stunned.
Magical	Spell drain. Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 saving throw using its spellcasting ability. On a failed save, the target is unable to cast spells for 1d4 + 1 rounds.

TABLE 21

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Vexing cut. Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target cannot take reactions for 2d4 rounds.
Piercing	Between the shoulders. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Bludgeoning	Gut punch. Triple damage.
Magical	Guiding attack. Maximum damage, and the target has disadvantage on saving throws against your spells for 2d4 rounds.

TABLE 22

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Follow-up. Maximum damage, and you may make another attack with advantage against the same target.
Piercing	Press the advantage. Triple damage and, if this was a melee attack, you can make a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check to increase this to quadruple damage.
Bludgeoning	Winded. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Magical	Bombardment. Triple damage.

TABLE 23

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Nave to chops. Triple damage.
Piercing	Follow-up. Maximum damage, and you may make another attack against the same target.
Bludgeoning	Soften 'em up. Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on saving throws for 1d4 + 1 rounds.
Magical	Precise magic. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.

TABLE 24

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slash to the ribs. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Piercing	Poke in the belly. Triple damage.
Bludgeoning	Get back! Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is pushed back 10 ft.
Magical	Terrifying display. Triple damage, and all enemies that can see you must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, they are frightened of you for 1d4 + 1 rounds.

TABLE 25

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Sliced tendon. Triple damage, and the target's speed is reduced to 5 ft. until the end of the target's next turn.
Piercing	In the knee. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Bludgeoning	Low blow. Triple damage.
Magical	Surge of power. Maximum damage, and you can immediately cast the same spell against any target within range, expending a spell slot as normal.

TABLE 26

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Sweep the legs. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone.
Piercing	Pinned. Triple damage, and the target is pinned to the ground and becomes restrained.
Bludgeoning	Shin bash. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Magical	Blast of power. Triple damage.

TABLE 27

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Calf slash. Triple damage.
Piercing	Target practice. Maximum damage, and any enemy of the target within range may make an attack of opportunity against it.
Bludgeoning	...And stay down. Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone.
Magical	Targeted spell. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.

TABLE 28

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Low slash. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Piercing	Pierced thigh. Triple damage.
Bludgeoning	Something slipped. Maximum damage, and the target's AC is reduced by 2d4 until the end of its next turn.
Magical	Big boom. Triple damage. If this attack deals force or thunder damage: the target is pushed back 2d4 × 5 ft. if it is Large or smaller, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 5 ft. traveled.

TABLE 29

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slow recovery. Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target can make two fewer attacks on their next turn.
Piercing	Shoulder jab. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Bludgeoning	Rap on the knuckles. Triple damage.
Magical	Resistance is futile. Maximum damage and, if the target is resistant to this damage type, it loses that resistance for 1 minute. If the target isn't resistant, it becomes vulnerable to this damage type for 1 minute.

TABLE 30

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	You get what you pay for. Maximum damage, and you and the target must make a contested Strength check. If the target loses, their weapon is partially broken and deals 1/4 damage until it is repaired.
Piercing	Distracting jab. Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on attacks for 1d4 + 1 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Drop it! Triple damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Strength or Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target drops what they are holding (GM decides which hand, or determines randomly).
Magical	Eruption. Triple damage.

TABLE 31

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slashed shoulder. Maximum damage, and roll the damage dice again.
Piercing	Find an opening. Maximum damage, and you have advantage on attacks against the target for 1d4 + 1 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Bruised joints. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on attacks for 1d4 + 1 rounds.
Magical	Didn't want it anyway... Triple damage, and two non-magical items the target is holding or wearing are also affected by the damage type of the spell.

TABLE 32

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Brow slash. Quadruple damage, and the target is blinded for 3d4 + 2 rounds.
Piercing	Pierced ear. Maximum double damage.
Bludgeoning	Bashed nose. Quadruple damage.
Magical	Magical barrage. Maximum damage, and 3 additional targets within range are affected at half potency, or the spell's area of effect is increased by 15 ft.

TABLE 33

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Terrifying slash. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is frightened of you for 3d4 rounds.
Piercing	With a sharp stick. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target loses an eye (GM decides which one).
Bludgeoning	Bonk on the noggin. Maximum double damage.
Magical	Spell storm. Quadruple damage.

TABLE 34

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slice to the cheek. Quadruple damage.
Piercing	Right in the kisser. Maximum damage, and the target cannot speak for 3d4 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Nighty night! Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked unconscious.
Magical	Impact. Maximum double damage.

TABLE 35

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Bloodied nose. Maximum double damage.
Piercing	Neck wound. Quadruple damage.
Bludgeoning	Stunning blow. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is stunned.
Magical	Spell drain. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 saving throw using its spellcasting ability. On a failed save, the target is unable to cast spells for 3d4 rounds.

TABLE 36

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Vexing cut. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target cannot take reactions for 3d4 rounds.
Piercing	Between the shoulders. Maximum double damage.
Bludgeoning	Gut punch. Quadruple damage.
Magical	Guiding attack. Maximum damage, and the target has disadvantage on saving throws against your spells for 3d4 rounds.

TABLE 37

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Follow-up. Maximum damage, and you may make another attack.
Piercing	Press the advantage. Quadruple damage and, if this was a melee attack, you can make a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check to increase this to quintuple damage.
Bludgeoning	Winded. Maximum double damage.
Magical	Bombardment. Quadruple damage.

TABLE 38

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Nave to chops. Quadruple damage.
Piercing	Follow-up. Maximum damage, and you may make another attack with advantage against the same target.
Bludgeoning	Soften 'em up. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on saving throws for 2d4 + 2 rounds.
Magical	Precise magic. Maximum double damage.

TABLE 39

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slash to the ribs. Maximum double damage.
Piercing	Poke in the belly. Quadruple damage.
Bludgeoning	Get back! Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is pushed back 15 ft.
Magical	Terrifying display. Quadruple damage, and all enemies that can see you must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, they are frightened of you for 2d4 + 2 rounds.

TABLE 40

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Sliced tendon. Quadruple damage, and the target's speed is reduced to 0 ft. until the end of the target's next turn.
Piercing	In the knee. Maximum double damage.
Bludgeoning	Low blow. Quadruple damage.
Magical	Surge of power. Maximum damage, and you can immediately cast the same spell against any target within range. This second attack does not expend a spell slot.

TABLE 41

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Sweep the legs. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone.
Piercing	Pinned. Quadruple damage, and the target is pinned to the ground and becomes restrained.
Bludgeoning	Shin bash. Maximum double damage.
Magical	Blast of power. Quadruple damage.

TABLE 42

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Calf slash. Quadruple damage.
Piercing	Target practice. Maximum damage, and any enemy of the target within range may make an attack of opportunity with advantage against it.
Bludgeoning	...And stay down. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone.
Magical	Targeted spell. Maximum double damage.

TABLE 43

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Low slash. Maximum double damage.
Piercing	Pierced thigh. Quadruple damage.
Bludgeoning	Something slipped. Maximum damage, and the target's AC is reduced by 3d4 until the end of its next turn.
Magical	Big boom. Quadruple damage. If this attack deals force or thunder damage: the target is pushed back 3d4 × 5 ft. if it is Large or smaller, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 5 ft. traveled.

TABLE 44

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Slow recovery. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target can make three fewer attacks on their next turn.
Piercing	Shoulder jab. Maximum double damage.
Bludgeoning	Rap on the knuckles. Quadruple damage.
Magical	Resistance is futile. Maximum damage, and the target becomes vulnerable to this damage type for 1 minute.

TABLE 45

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	You get what you pay for. Maximum damage, and you and the target must make a contested Strength check. If the target loses, their weapon is broken.
Piercing	Distracting jab. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on attacks for 2d4 + 2 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Bruised joints. Maximum damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target has disadvantage on attacks for 2d4 + 2 rounds.
Magical	Eruption. Quadruple damage.

TABLE 46

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Forearm blow. Quadruple damage.
Piercing	Find an opening. Maximum damage, and you have advantage on attacks against the target for 2d4 + 2 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Drop it! Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Strength or Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target drops what they are holding (GM decides which hand, or determines randomly).
Magical	Didn't want it anyway... Quadruple damage, and three items the target is holding or wearing are also affected by the damage type of the spell.

TABLE 47

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Don't lose your head! Quadruple damage and, if the damage the target takes is equal to or greater than 1/2 of their maximum hit points, they are decapitated.
Piercing	Pressure point. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target is paralyzed.
Bludgeoning	Nighty night! Quadruple damage and, if the damage the target takes is equal to or greater than 1/4 of its maximum hit points, it is knocked unconscious.
Magical	Rejuvenation. Quadruple damage, and you regain a spell slot. Roll a d6 to determine the level of the spell slot.

TABLE 48

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Gutted. Quadruple damage and, if the damage the target takes is equal to or greater than 1/2 of their maximum hit points, they are disemboweled.
Piercing	Shot through the heart. Quadruple damage, and the target loses 1/4 of their maximum hit points at the beginning of their turn for 3 rounds.
Bludgeoning	Tenderizer. Quadruple damage, and the target becomes vulnerable to bludgeoning damage for 1 minute.
Magical	Detonation. Quadruple damage, and all creatures within 15 ft. of the target are also affected.

TABLE 49

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	I never touched a drop! Quadruple damage and, if the damage the target takes is equal to or greater than 1/4 of their maximum hit points, they lose a leg.
Piercing	Chink in the armor. Quadruple damage, and the target becomes vulnerable to piercing damage for 1 minute.
Bludgeoning	Shattered knee. Quadruple damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 1/2. Additionally, for every 5 ft. the target moves, it takes 1d6 damage.
Magical	Blink and you'll miss it. Quadruple damage, and the target must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is unable to see you for 1 minute.

TABLE 50

Damage Type	Effect
Slashing	Disarmed. Quadruple damage and, if the damage the target takes is equal to or greater than 1/2 of their maximum hit points, they lose an arm/hand.
Piercing	Distracting jab. Quadruple damage, and the target has disadvantage on attacks until the end of the encounter.
Bludgeoning	Crushed hand. Quadruple damage, and the target loses use of one of its arms or hands.
Magical	Terrifying display. Quadruple damage, and all enemies that can see you must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, they are frightened of you. An enemy can repeat this saving throw at the end of its turn to stop being frightened.

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