

D&D Next Playtest Update

October 29, 2012

Welcome to the D&D Next playtest! This is an exciting opportunity to try out pieces of the next iteration of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and to provide your feedback.

In the playtest, you are looking at portions of the game, not the whole thing. Because of that fact, you might find things in the rules that are unclear or that refer to elements of the game that aren't yet in the playtest. Let us know through our surveys what works, what doesn't work, what you don't like, and what you like.

Using This Material

If you are a player, here is the recommended order for reading the playtest packet's documents:

1. **How to Play.** The rest of the playtest packet assumes you are familiar with this document, which presents the basics of play.
2. **Character Creation.** This document guides you through creating a character and points you to the packet's other player-focused documents: Races, Classes, Backgrounds and Skills, Specialties and Feats, Equipment, Maneuvers, and Spells.

If you are a Dungeon Master, here is the recommended reading order:

1. **How to Play.** The rest of the playtest packet assumes you are familiar with this document, which presents the basics of play.
2. **DM Guidelines.** A mix of DMing advice and rules, this document includes the nuts and bolts of setting DCs and crafting combat encounters.
3. **Bestiary.** Containing a selection of low-level monsters, this document gives you enough creatures to try out encounter building.

General Rule Changes

Many areas of the rules have been clarified or expanded. Here are some of the highlights.

Levels 6–10: The playtest now supports play through level 10.

Opportunity Attacks: A creature making an opportunity attack no longer automatically does so with advantage.

Healing: A couple of experimental rules for healing have been added.

Concentration: Some spells now require concentration. The rules for concentration have been added to the How to Play document.

New Actions: New types of actions, including contests such as disarm and grab, have been added.

Critical Hit: The rule for critical hits has been revised.

Two-Weapon Fighting: Two weapon-fighting is now in the combat rules.

Stealth and Perception: The guidelines for hiding and for finding hidden things have undergone revision to clarify the uses of Wisdom and Intelligence.

Class Changes

Cleric: The cleric's Channel Divinity feature has been cut. The class now has a Turn Undead feature. The class's domain choice has been recast as a choice of deity, which supplies a cleric with domain spells, at-will spells, and a class feature. The class's spellcasting rules have also been revised.

Fighter: The fighter's expertise die progression has been changed. New combat maneuvers have been added in support of the higher level fighter. The fighter also gains an extra attack at level 6.

Rogue: The rogue now has expertise dice and gets access to various maneuvers, including Sneak Attack. The Skill Mastery and Knack class features have been removed, the

but the class has maneuvers that compensate. Several new rogue schemes have been added.

Sorcerer and Warlock: The sorcerer and the warlock do not appear in this packet. As a result of playtest feedback, we are exploring new approaches to these classes, as well as new options for magic.

Wizard: The wizard's starting hit points have been raised. The wizard's spellcasting ability has undergone significant changes tied to the addition of traditions of wizardry, which supplies the wizard with the ability to use certain spells at will and to reuse a signature spell.

Spell Changes

Expanded Levels: Spells have been expanded to support characters levels 1–10.

Additions and Deletions: Some spells have been removed from the previous spell list, and other spells have been added.

Revisions to Spell Descriptions: Many of the spell descriptions and effects have been revised.

Words of Power: Some spells are now tagged as words of power, in support of the cleric. See the cleric for details.

Maneuvers

The maneuvers that previously appeared in the fighter have been pulled into a separate document. Maneuvers are now available to the fighter and the rogue.

Character Creation

Skills: A character now starts with four skills, instead of three.

Customizing Ability Scores: Optional rules have been added for customizing ability scores.

XP Advancement Values: The number of experience points required to level up has been changed for levels 1–10.

Backgrounds and Skills

Skill List: The skill list has been revised. Skills are a little narrower and are no longer tied to specific ability scores.

New Backgrounds: New backgrounds have been added.

Specialties and Feats

Additions and Deletions: Some of the specialties previously appearing in the playtest are not in this release. Other specialties have been added. And most of the specialties have new names to reflect their current emphases.

Feat Revisions: Many feats have revised benefits.

Magic Items

This section has not undergone any changes since it released on October 8.

DM Guidelines

Combat Encounter Guidelines: XP values to determine combat encounter difficulty have been adjusted.

Shadows: Shadows are now referred to as dim light in the rules on illumination.

Monster Changes

Additions: Dozens of monsters have been added in support of higher-level play.

Monster Math: Many of the monsters had their statistics adjusted, including ability scores, damage, hit points, and XP.

Recharge: A recharge mechanic was added to a number of monsters.

Optional Traits and Actions: Certain monsters now have traits or actions that can be added at the DM's discretion.

Fixed Damage Option: A DM now has a choice between using a fixed damage number or rolling damage, both of which are listed in a monster's stat block.