

Exploration

Exploration involves delving into places that are dangerous and full of mystery. The rules in this section detail some of the ways adventurers interact with the environment in such places.

Adventuring Equipment

As adventurers explore, their equipment can help them in many ways. For example, they can reach out-of-the-way places with a Ladder, perceive things they wouldn't otherwise notice with a Torch or another light source, bypass locked doors and containers with Thieves' Tools, and create obstacles for pursuers with Caltrops.

See “Equipment” for rules on many items that are useful on adventures. The items in the “Tools” and “Adventuring Gear” sections are especially useful. The weapons in “Equipment” can also be used for more than battle; you could use a Quarterstaff, for example, to push a sinister-looking button that you're reluctant to touch.

Vision and Light

Some adventuring tasks — such as noticing danger, hitting an enemy, and targeting certain spells — are affected by sight, so effects that obscure vision can hinder you, as explained below.

Obscured Areas

An area might be Lightly or Heavily Obscured. In a Lightly Obscured area — such as an area with Dim Light, patchy fog, or moderate foliage — you have Disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

A Heavily Obscured area — such as an area with Darkness, heavy fog, or dense foliage — is opaque. You have the Blinded condition (see “Rules Glossary”) when trying to see something there.

Light

The presence or absence of light determines the category of illumination in an area, as defined below.

Bright Light. Bright Light lets most creatures see normally. Even gloomy days provide Bright Light, as do torches, lanterns, fires, and other sources of illumination within a specific radius.

Dim Light. Dim Light, also called shadows, creates a Lightly Obscured area. An area of Dim Light is usually a boundary between Bright Light and surrounding Darkness. The soft light of twilight and dawn also counts as Dim Light. A full moon might bathe the land in Dim Light.

Darkness. Darkness creates a Heavily Obscured area. Characters face Darkness outdoors at night (even most moonlit nights), within the confines of an unlit dungeon, or in an area of magical Darkness.

Special Senses

Some creatures have special senses that help them perceive things in certain situations. “Rules Glossary” defines the following special senses: * Blindsight * Darkvision * Tremorsense * Truesight

Hiding

Adventurers and monsters often hide, whether to spy on one another, sneak past a guardian, or set an ambush. The Game Master decides when circumstances are appropriate for hiding. When you try to hide, you take the Hide action.

Interacting with Objects

Interacting with objects is often simple to resolve. The player tells the GM that their character is doing something, such as moving a lever or opening a door, and the GM describes what happens. Sometimes, however, rules govern what you can do with an object, as detailed in the following sections.

What Is an Object?

For the purpose of the rules, an object is a discrete, inanimate item like a window, door, sword, book, table, chair, or stone. It isn't a building or a vehicle, which are composed of many objects.

Time-Limited Object Interactions

When time is short, such as in combat, interactions with objects are limited: one free interaction per turn. That interaction must occur during a creature's movement or action. Any additional interactions require the Utilize action, as explained in “Combat” later in “Playing the Game.”

Finding Hidden Objects

When your character searches for hidden things, such as a secret door or a trap, the GM typically asks you to make a Wisdom (Perception) check, provided you describe the character searching in the hidden object's vicinity. On a success, you find the object, other important details, or both. If you describe your character searching nowhere near a hidden object, a Wisdom (Perception) check won't reveal the object, no matter the check's total.

Carrying Objects

You can usually carry your gear and treasure without worrying about the weight of those objects. If you try to haul an unusually heavy object or a massive number of lighter objects, the GM might require you to abide by the rules for carrying capacity in “Rules Glossary.”

Breaking Objects

As an action, you can automatically break or otherwise destroy a fragile, nonmagical object, such as a glass container or a piece of paper. If you try to damage something more resilient, the GM might use the rules on breaking objects in “Rules Glossary.”

Hazards

Monsters are the main perils characters face, but other dangers await. “Rules Glossary” defines the following hazards:

- Burning
- Dehydration
- Falling
- Malnutrition
- Suffocation

Travel

During an adventure, the characters might travel long distances on trips that could take hours or days. The GM can summarize this travel without calculating exact distances or travel times, or the GM might have you use the travel pace rules below.

If you need to know how fast you can move when every second matters, see the movement rules in “Combat” later in “Playing the Game.”

“ Marching Order

The adventurers should establish a marching order while they travel, whether indoors or outdoors. A marching order makes it easier to determine which characters are affected by traps, which ones can spot hidden enemies, and which ones are the closest to those enemies if a fight breaks out. You can change your marching order outside combat and record the order any way you like: write it down, for example, or arrange miniatures to show it.

Travel Pace

While traveling outside combat, a group can move at a Fast, Normal, or Slow pace, as shown on the Travel Pace table. The table states how far the party can move in a period of time; if riding horses or other mounts, the group can move twice that distance for 1 hour, after which the mounts need a Short or Long Rest before they can move at that increased pace again (see “Equipment” for a selection of mounts for sale). “Gameplay Toolbox” has rules that affect which pace you can choose in certain types of terrain.

Travel Pace Table

Pace	Distance Traveled Per Minute	Hour	Day
Fast	400 feet	4 miles	30 miles
Normal	300 feet	3 miles	24 miles
Slow	200 feet	2 miles	18 miles

Each travel pace has a game effect, as defined below.

Fast. Traveling at a Fast pace imposes Disadvantage on a traveler's Wisdom (Perception or Survival) and Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Normal. Traveling at a Normal pace imposes Disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Slow. Traveling at a Slow pace grants Advantage on Wisdom (Perception or Survival) checks.

Vehicles

Travelers in wagons, carriages, or other land vehicles choose a pace as normal. Characters in a waterborne vessel are limited to the speed of the vessel, and they don't choose a travel pace. Depending on the vessel and the size of the crew, ships might be able to travel for up to 24 hours per day. "Equipment" includes vehicles for sale.

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