DCG ADVENTURE STARTER

RULES

Players play the role of one or more characters who go adventuring. Players work collaboratively against the game. One player reads the entries aloud, and tracks progress. In solitaire play, you play the characters and track your own progress.

Entries

The adventure text comprises numbered entries. Do not read the entries sequentially, they are deliberately scrambled.

Each entry contains options followed by numbers in parentheses. When you select an option, turn immediately to the corresponding numbered entry, and continue from there.

Plot Words

Some options show a word in parentheses (EXAMPLE). If you choose that option, record the corresponding plot word.

Battles

When instructed to fight, place your character pieces on the board as instructed by the game entry. If the lettered starting spaces are full, place your pieces adjacent. Unless stated otherwise, your characters move first.

Player Turn

The active player moves his characters one at a time. He completes one character's turn before going to the next. When all a player's characters have moved, the next player begins.

Character Turn

In his turn, a character moves, and then executes ONE action. An action can be an attack, (striking, shooting, or grappling), casting a spell, or using an item.

Example

Ajax moves five hexes and strikes his foe.

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

Each character has three attributes: Strength, Dexterity, and Intelligence. Average is 10.

Strength (ST)

Strong fighters inflict/endure more damage.

Dexterity (DX)

Agile fighters can better hit and dodge.

Intelligence (IQ)

Smart characters excel at skills and magic.

Example

Ajax is ST14 DX10 IQ8

TERMINOLOGY

Dice

A six-sided die is abbreviated d6. Two six-sided dice are 2d6, three dice—3d6, etc.

Checks/Hitting a Foe

A character checks DX to hit a foe. He must roll his DX or less on 3d6 to hit. If he hits, roll damage (Weapons / Armor).

Example

Ajax DX10 rolls 4, 3, 2 = 9. This is Ajax's DX or less. He hits his foe and rolls damage.

Checking Attributes

Check $3/ST$ for strength, $3/DX$ for skill, and $3/IQ$ for intelligence. A more difficult four-die check appears as $4/ST$, $4/DX$, or $4/IQ$.

Example

Ajax ST14 checks $4/ST$ to move a heavy boulder. He rolls 4, 3, 2, 1 = 10. 10 is less than Ajax's ST14. He moves the boulder.

Winning a Roll

To win a contested action, a character rolls against his foe. Both sides roll any number of dice. The higher total wins. *A total exceeding a character's attribute fails*.

Example

Ajax ST14 wrestles a foe ST9 (Ajax must win $ST/9$). Ajax rolls 5, 4, 3 = 12. His foe rolls 4, 3, 2 = 9. 12 beats 9 and Ajax wins.

WEAPONS/ARMOR

Weapons

Melee weapons strike adjacent foes, missile weapons hit foes at range. Missile weapons can hit any *unobstructed* target (Character Catalog).

Damage & Heft

A weapon has a damage rating and a heft. Damage is the number of dice of damage the weapon inflicts. Heft is the minimum ST required to use the weapon.

Example

Ajax wields a great sword. It delivers 3d6-1 damage. It has heft 14 (3d6-1/14).

Example

Ajax strikes a foe. His great sword does 3d6-1. He rolls 4, 3, 2 = 9. 9 - 1 = 8. He deals 8 damage to his foe.

Armor

Armor reduces the damage a character takes when hit. Armor also burdens a character (Character Catalog).

Example

Ajax delivers 8 damage, but his foe's armor stops 2. His foe suffers 6 damage.

Armor Burden

Adjust a character's DX down by the burden rating of his armor.

Example

Ajax's foe DX10 has armor that stops 2 damage and has a burden of 1 (*2/1*). His foe has an effective DX9.

DAMAGE & FATIGUE

Damage

A character is "out" if he suffers his ST or more in damage. He can neither move nor act. He is dead if damage is 2x ST. After battle, he must be healed to 1ST or he dies. A character recovers fully between adventures.

Example

Ajax ST14 suffers 10 damage. His foe hits him again, delivering 6 damage. Ajax has 16 damage, which is greater than his ST14. Ajax is "out," and can do nothing. If he is not healed by 3ST after the battle, he is dead (Medic / Character Catalog).

Fatigue

A character suffering (damage + fatigue) equal to his ST or more is "out." Fatigue recovers fully with sleep.

Example

Ajax ST14 suffered 10 damage. His foe delivers 5 fatigue, knocking him out. After sleeping, he wakes up with 10 damage, but no fatigue.

MOVEMENT

Game Board & Movement

The game board is divided into spaces to regulate movement. Each turn, a character can move a number of spaces equal to half his DX, rounded down. After moving, he can execute one action.

Example

Ajax DX10 moves 5 spaces and strikes a foe.

Space

One character occupies a space. A character stops upon entering a foe's space (Tackle).

ATTACK

After moving, an attacker can attack ONE foe. The attacker can strike, shoot, throw a weapon, tackle, or grapple a foe.

Strike

An attacker hits an adjacent foe by passing $3/DX$. If he hits, roll damage (Damage).

Example

Ajax DX10 rolls 4, 3, 2, = 9. This is less than his DX10. Ajax hits his foe and rolls damage.

Shoot/Throw

An attacker with a shooting/throwing weapon hits a foe by passing $3/DX$. A shooter cannot move in his turn, but a thrower can. Targets behind cover are 4/DX to hit.

Example

Ajax DX10 shoots a foe. He rolls 4, 3, 2, totaling 9. He hits his target and rolls damage.

Range

A missile or thrown weapon has the range to hit any target on the playing board.

Line of Sight

A shooter can only hit targets in his line of sight. A character or obstacle between a shooter and a target blocks line of sight.

Tackle

A fighter tackles a foe by winning DX. Advance him into his foe's hex. If he fails, the weaker fighter retreats away one hex.

Example

Ajax DX10 tackles his foe DX11. Ajax rolls 4, 3, 2, totaling 9. His foe rolls 3, 2, 1, totaling 6. Ajax's 9 beats his foe's 6. Ajax enters his foe's hex. The two now grapple.

Animals

Animals do damage on the same turn that they tackle a foe.

Grapple

Characters in the same space can only fight each other. The fighter winning ST can:
(1) Roll damage on his foe;
(2) Exit to an empty adjacent hex;

(3) Push his foe away one hex; or

(4) Drag his foe one hex with him.

Unarmed human attacks do d6-3 damage (no armor). The stronger fighter does +1 damage. The weaker fighter does -1. A grappler with 2x ST of his foe moves and acts normally, carrying his foe with him.

Example

Ajax ST14 grapples a foe ST12. Ajax rolls 5, 4, 3 = 12. His foe rolls 4, 3, 2 = 9. Ajax wins, and decides to roll damage d6-2 (stronger).

REACT

A defender can react to ONE attack, but loses his ensuing turn. A defender can dodge, counterattack, or tackle ONE foe.

Dodge

A defender dodges a strike by passing **3/DX**. The defender retreats one hex **away** from his foe. If there is no empty hex, the defender cannot dodge. *The defending player may view the attacker's hit roll, but not damage roll, before deciding to dodge.*

Example

A foe successfully strikes Ajax. Ajax DX10 dodges, rolling 4, 3, 2 = 9. He retreats one hex away from his foe, into an empty space. Ajax is not hit, but he loses his next turn.

Counterattack

A character surviving an attack can immediately strike, shoot/throw a weapon, or tackle his attacker. If he hits, roll damage.

Example

A foe strikes Ajax and rolls damage. Ajax survives and counterattacks. Ajax hits his foe and rolls damage. Ajax loses his next turn.

Tackle

A defender surviving a strike can immediately tackle his foe. He succeeds by winning DX.

Example

A foe strikes Ajax and rolls damage. Ajax survives. Ajax wins DX and the two grapple. Ajax loses his next turn.

First Attack

A target of a tackle, who has not yet reacted this turn, can strike or shoot his foe first. This occurs before the tackle. If he hits the tackler, he rolls an extra die damage.

Example

A foe DX12 tackles Ajax DX10. Ajax has not yet reacted, so he conducts a First Attack. Ajax hits and rolls damage, rolling an extra die. If his foe survives, his foe tackles Ajax by winning DX.

Zone of Control

If an attacker, adjacent to a defender, moves to another adjacent space without attacking, the defender can react. The reaction can be a counterattack or a tackle.

MAGIC

A character can cast a spell as an action. He succeeds by passing **3/IQ**. Some spells require the character to **win IQ** against his target. (Character Catalog)

Example

Magus IQ13 throws a fireball at a foe. He rolls 5, 4, 3 = 12. He hits, and rolls damage.

Requirements

A mage can only use spells his IQ or less. He cannot move in the turn he casts, and he cannot cast while in a space with a foe. The mage can cast into any unobstructed space.

Fatigue Rating (F)

Each spell has an F rating. Upon successfully casting a spell, the mage suffers F in fatigue.

Example

Magus ST9 throws a Fireball F3. He suffers 3 fatigue. If he suffers 6 more damage/fatigue, he falls unconscious.

Staff/Wands

A staff/wand absorbs fatigue for a mage, up to its capacity. Staffs/wands fully recharge when the mage sleeps. A staff does d6 damage if wielded as a weapon.

Example

Magus carries a staff d6 F9. Magus throws a fireball, depleting 3 fatigue from the staff, not himself. After another 6 fatigue from casting spells, the staff is depleted until Magus sleeps.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

A character earns one experience point (XP) per fight he wins, or plot word he gets. A character expends XP to improve attributes.

Attributes

Characters increase attributes by spending XP = 3/2 x current attribute, rounded down.

Example

Ajax DX10 spends 15 XP to increase his DX to 11 (3/2 x DX10 = 15).

Skills

A character learns a one-point skill by spending 10XP. (Character catalog)

Example

Ajax spends 10XP for Unarmed Combat. When fighting unarmed, for each *Unarmed Combat* skill point he has, his ST/DX is +1, and he does +1 damage.

Karma/Wish

A character passes a failed roll by using a karma point. A character uses a wish to fully revive, even if he just died. Karma, Wishes, & XP roll over to new adventures.

Curse

A curse reduces ST/DX/IQ by one point, until the curse is lifted. The character lifts the curse by expending one wish, or by permanently reducing his highest attribute by one point. Curses are cumulative.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Sample characters appear below. To create your own, distribute 32 points, with a minimum 8 points per attribute (ST/DX/IQ). A character begins with 4 skill points, two of which can be combat skills (Character catalog).

Ajax ST14 DX10 IQ8 (Barbarian)

Skills: Sword+2, HTH+2

Weapons: 2-Handed. Sword 3d6-1/14

Armor: Cloth 1/0

Magus ST9 DX10 IQ13 (Wizard)

Spells/Skills:

- Fireball: 3d6 IQ12 F3
- Invisibility: Target is 5/DX to hit. IQ12 F4
- Heal Wounds: IQ10 F=wounds healed.
- Sorcerer's Tongue

Weapons: Staff d6/8 F9

Armor: Wizard's Cloak 2/0

Hector ST11 DX10 IQ11 (Space Trooper)

Skills: Rifle+2, Leadership+1, Charisma+1

Weapons: Blaster 3d6/9 (rifle skill)

Armor: Light Battle Armor 5/1

Wild Jake ST10 DX12 IQ10 (Cowboy)

Skills: Pistol+2, Tracker+1, Stealth+1

Weapons: Revolver 2d6-1/8

Armor: Canvas Coat 1/0

THE ADVENTURE

Enemy Tactics

Enemy archers/wizards target your wizards and your archers. Otherwise foes attack your closest character. Foes attack or counterattack only--they do not dodge. Any foe, human or animal, flees on taking 1/2ST damage.

Checking at Locations

When the party must pass a check, select one character. That character has one chance to pass, or the entire party suffers the consequences.

Fantasy Economics

Money is denominated into Copper (c), Silver (s), and Gold (g). 10c = 1s, 100s = 1g. 1c is about a day of unskilled labor.

Science Fiction Economics

Money is denominated into credits. One credit is about one hour of unskilled labor.

Western Economics

Money is denominated into dollars. One dollar is about a day of unskilled labor.

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