

BLOOD & BULLETS

OLD WEST RPG

By Simon Washbourne

Based upon: Swords & Wizardry: Whitebox By Marv Breig
& Swords & Wizardry: Core Rules by Matthew J. Finch

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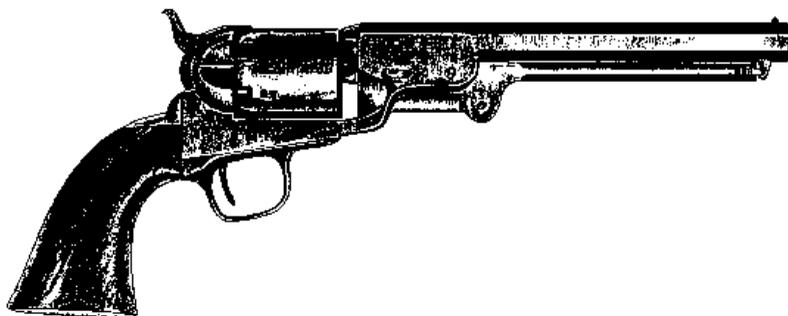
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Introduction

Blood & Bullets: is a role-playing game set in the Wild West. It is based on a set of 'old school' fantasy role playing rules, which itself was based on the first fantasy role playing game.

You are free to publish your own adventures, house-rules, and any other sort of materials designed for this game. Guidelines and requirements are at the end of the book.

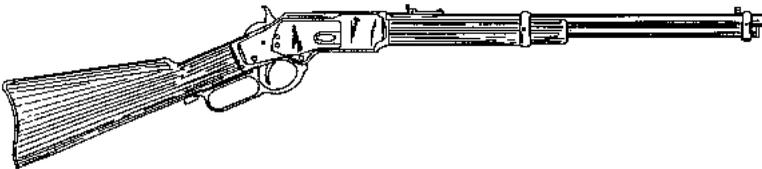
– Simon Washbourne

Historical Accuracy & Gender Issues

Blood & Bullets isn't necessarily intended to be an accurate history lesson; it is designed primarily as an old western game utilizing, and to be more-or-less compatible with, the Swords & Wizardry rule set. Historical accuracy isn't even the secondary goal, which is really to create a game that gives you the feel and trappings of the Old West without having to get too bogged down in the who's, why's what's and where's.

To this end, gender doesn't matter. Any character, male or female, can equally be a Shootist, a Trailblazer or a Gambler. There may be individual situations, for example, where the fact that there is a woman Trailblazer in the group becomes an issue but this is simply to make for an interesting scenario (or for a particularly misogynistic bad guy) and not as the main focus of the game.

I have used the term "Indians" when referring to Native Americans in these rules. This is not in any way meant to cause offense; it is simply that in the Old West people were less aware of the offence this term for the original inhabitants of North America might cause (or in some cases didn't think about it or indeed care). In these more enlightened times, we don't use this term any more, but in the period this game is set, it is an appropriate term.



CHAPTER 1: GETTING STARTED

Blood & Bullets Old West RPG (B&B), like most role playing games requires one person to run the game, called the Referee and (preferably) two or more players. For Players, the first step in playing the game is to create a Player Character (PC). This is a simple matter of rolling some dice to determine your character's strength and other basic attributes, picking a character class, and buying in-game equipment. If you're the Referee, however, you've got a bit more preparation to do—that's covered later in these rules.

Rule Number One

The most important rule in B&B is that the Referee always has the right to modify the rules. In fact, it's encouraged! This is your game, after all. There are gaps in the rules—holes left open on purpose—because much of the fun of “old school” gaming is being able to make up rules as needed.

Dice

B&B uses several different types of dice, and they are abbreviated herein according to the number of sides they have. For example, a four-sided die is noted as “d4.” If this text requires a player to roll “3d4” that means to roll three (3) four-sided dice and add the results together. Other die types (six-sided, eight-sided, ten-sided, twelve-sided, and twenty-sided) follow in the same manner. However, there is no die with 100 sides. When asked to roll d100, instead roll two (2) ten-sided dice, treating the first roll as the “tens” and the second as the “ones.” So, if one were to roll a “7” and then a “3”, the result would be “73.” Please note that rolling two zeroes is treated as “100.”

Remember

Throughout this text are suggestions, explanations, and ideas presented in textbox format; feel free to use or discard them at leisure. New rules for governing certain situations can range from simple guidelines like “grab some dice, roll them, and tell me the number” to a complex series of tables for the smallest of details.



Character Sheets

A character sheet is a piece of paper designed to organize and contain any and all necessary PC information, for the benefit of both the Referee and Player. For B&B, the character sheet could be something as simple as a 3x5" index card—with equipment and other notes written on the back:

NAME	
STR	CLASS
INT	LEVEL
WIS	XP
CON	ST
DEX	DC
CHA	HP
	ENC
\$	MOVE

Attribute Scores

The basic abilities are numbers which represent the Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Constitution, Dexterity and Charisma of a character.

Rolling Attributes

Roll 3d6 for each attribute in the above order. Once those rolls have been made, it is often obvious which type of character best fits the abilities. However, the player always has the option to play any class he wants.

Optional: Rolling Attributes

Some Referees prefer to allow players more flexibility in their choice of class. One possible option would be to roll 3d6 a total of six times and allow players to "arrange to taste." This allows the player to put the best results on the attributes that best suit a particular character concept.

Attribute Modifier

Each attribute has the potential to modify what you can do. Refer to the following table to see the bonuses (or penalties) that apply from high or low attributes.

Table 1: Attribute Modifier

Attribute Roll	Description	Bonus/Penalty
3	Very Poor	-3 (or -5%)
4-5	Poor	-2 (or -5%)
6-8	Below Average	-1 (or -5%)
9-12	Average	-
13-15	Above Average	+1 (or +5%)
16-17	Good	+2 (or +5%)
18	Exceptional	+3 (or +5%)

Experience Modifier

Each character gets a bonus (or penalty) percentage to their “experience points” (XP) that will increase the amount of experience points gained during an adventure. All characters add together their percentage Prime Attribute Bonus, Wisdom Bonus, and Charisma Bonus for a total experience bonus for the character. The maximum attainable bonus is 15%.

Strength (STR)

A high Strength lets a character carry more weight and will give him bonuses to attacks and damage when attacking with a melee weapon or his fists.

Intelligence (INT)

Intelligence represents IQ, reasoning, and the ability to solve puzzles or understand difficult concepts. A high Intelligence score gives a character an additional language for every point above 10.

Wisdom (WIS)

Wisdom determines a character’s insight, perception, good judgment and willpower.

Constitution (CON)

Constitution refers to the health and endurance of a character. A high Constitution score gives a character additional hit points per hit die. CON is the Prime Attribute for *Trailblazers*.

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity is a combination of coordination and quickness. A high Dexterity score gives a character a bonus on their “to-hit” roll when attacking with a firearms or other ranged weapons and gives them a better *Defence Class*. DEX is the Prime Attribute for *Shootists*.

Charisma (CHA)

A highly charismatic character has a better chance to talk his way out of trouble and can lead more followers than a character with a lower Charisma. CHA is the Prime Attribute for *Gamblers*.

You can use your CHA to modify the number of Non-Player Character (NPC) hirelings you can acquire. You can use your CHA to modify the loyalty of these NPCs (See Loyalty, Page 22).

Table 2: Charisma Bonus

Charisma	Hirelings	Loyalty
3	1	-3
4-5	2	-2
6-8	3	-1
9-12	4	0
13-15	5	+1
16-17	6	+2
18	7	+3

Hit Points

Hit points (HP) represent the amount of “damage” a character can take before dying and are determined by the amount of Hit Dice (HD) a character has at their particular class level. If a Player begins the game with a 1st level Shootist (1+1 HD) he would therefore roll 1 HD (1d6) and add “+1” to the end result to determine his PC’s starting HP. It doesn’t solely represent the character’s ability to absorb injury – it also represents the experience of the character to turn what might have been a mortal wound into a flesh wound, by correct positioning, general awareness, use of cover, distractions etc..

HP are re-rolled each time a Player Character advances in level—however, if the re-roll results in a character having fewer HP for their new level than their previous level, ignore the re-roll and retain the prior amount.

Defence Class

A character’s Defence Class (DC) represents his ability to avoid being hit in combat; it is a measure of his luck, reactions and experience. DC starts at 10 for everybody. To this number, you add the character’s DEX modifier, if any and the characters Defence Bonus (based on class and level).

Saving Throw

The Saving Throw (ST) is the number the character needs to roll on a D20 to avoid something bad happening to him. You add the character's Attribute Modifier to the roll, where an attribute is appropriate. For example, if a snake bites your character, you can attempt a save against the poison. You'd add your character's CON modifier, in this instance. The ST might also be used as the roll needed to attempt to use some of the character's class abilities – these are set out in each class description.

Table 3: Saving Throw Examples

Danger/Effect	Attribute
Alcohol or poison	CON
Ambush	WIS
Death	CON
Deception	WIS
Drowning	CON
Explosion	DEX
Falling	DEX
Grappled	STR
Remembering facts	INT
Rockfall	DEX

Levels

As characters gain XP, they improve at what they do. This is represented by level advancement. At each level, the character is tougher and can position himself better in combat to make what would be deadly hits into glancing blows or grazes (receives more HP). He is also more accurate (increased To Hit Bonus) and more alert to dangers that might otherwise kill him (better Saving Throw).



CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CLASSES

There are three character classes in the game: the Shootist, the Gambler and the Trailblazer. The Referee is free to invent other character classes or may allow optional classes from other games.

THE SHOOTIST

The Shootist is a character that usually turns to the gun to get things done. He might be a lawman, an ex-soldier, a bandit leader or a gunslinger; whatever he is, he lives by the gun and will undoubtedly die by the gun.

Table 4: Shootist Advancement

Level	XP	HD (d6)	To Hit Bonus	Defence Bonus	ST
1	0	1	+0	+0	16
2	1750	2	+1	+1	15
3	3500	3	+2	+1	14
4	7000	3+1	+2	+2	13
5	14000	4	+3	+2	12
6	28000	5	+4	+3	11
7	56000	6	+4	+3	10
8	112000	6+1	+5	+4	9
9	224000	7	+6	+4	8
10	448000	8	+6	+5	7

Shootist Class Abilities

Weapons: The Shootist can use any weapons.

Saving Throw: Shootists receive a +2 bonus on saving throws vs. death.

Calculatin' Eye (INT): The Shootist can choose to weigh up the opposition at the start of a gunfight and make a saving throw to see if he can determine the strengths and weaknesses of the opposition (i.e. their level or HD).

Gun-play: The Shootist gets one attack per level against foes of 1HD or fewer, each round if using a firearm, up to the number of shots available in his gun(s). For e.g. if he has two six-shooters, he can attack up to 10 targets per round (at the maximum 10th level).

Sure Shot: The Shootist receives a +1 bonus to hit and damage using one type of firearm, chosen at outset (see the equipment section).

XP Bonus for Dexterity: DEX is the Prime Attribute for Shootists, which means that a high DEX score grants them an extra 5% on XP earned.

THE GAMBLER

The Gambler is a maverick, cheat, scoundrel and a con-man; drifting from saloon to saloon to play cards or dice or place a wager on any one of a number of other contests; horse racing, boxing, cock-fighting amongst others.

Table 5: Gambler Advancement

Level	XP	HD (d6)	To Hit Bonus	Defence Bonus	ST
1	0	1	+0	+0	15
2	1500	1+1	+0	+1	14
3	3000	2	+1	+2	13
4	6000	2+1	+1	+2	12
5	12000	3	+2	+3	11
6	24000	3+1	+2	+4	10
7	48000	4	+3	+4	9
8	96000	4+1	+3	+5	8
9	192000	5	+4	+6	7
10	384000	5+1	+4	+6	6

Gambler Class Abilities

Weapons: Gamblers can use any weapons but prefer smaller concealable ones; they are unlikely to ever need to use long rifles, buffalo rifles or horse pistols for example.

Saving Throw: Gamblers receive a +2 bonus on saving throws vs. deceit

Lucky Streak: Gamblers can re-roll any failed saving throw once per 3 levels per day (that is once at levels 1-3, twice at levels 4-6, three times at levels 7-9 and four times at level 10).

Information Gathering (CHA): Gamblers hear two rumours in a saloon whenever a drink is bought or he plays a game of cards or dice.

Silvertongue (CHA): Gamblers have the gift of the gab – they can lie, cheat, bluff and swindle. They can use this skill to get out of tricky situations or to trick the gullible into doing something they wouldn't normally do.

Sleight (DEX): Gamblers can manipulate cards, coins and other small objects deftly and, using misdirection, without being noticed. They can use this skill to pick pockets too.

Sneak attack: Gamblers often have concealed weapons which they are adept at using in emergencies. They can score x2 damage on a successful hit by surprise; this can be done with a knife, derringer or pocket pistol only.

XP Bonus for Charisma: CHA is the Prime Attribute for Gamblers, which means that a high CHA score grants them an additional 5% on XP earned.

THE TRAILBLAZER

The Trailblazer is a rough-and-tumble type of character that spends much of his time on the trail; he could be a drifter, a scout, a Native brave, a mountain man, a tracker, a prospector, a teamster, a stage driver or a cowpoke.

Table 6: Trailblazer Advancement

Level	XP	HD (d6)	To Hit Bonus	Defence Bonus	ST
1	0	1+1	+0	+0	16
2	2000	2	+1	+0	15
3	4000	3	+1	+1	14
4	8000	4	+2	+1	13
5	16000	5	+2	+2	12
6	32000	6	+3	+2	11
7	64000	7	+3	+3	10
8	128000	8	+4	+3	9
9	256000	9	+4	+4	8
10	512000	10	+5	+4	7

Trailblazer Class Abilities

Weapons: Trailblazers can use any weapons but aren't likely to bother with derringers and pocket pistols. Players should select weapons that suit their idea of the character: A Mountain Man would have a large caliber musket or sharps rifle for bringing down large game; a cowboy would have a pistol for shooting snakes and a carbine or rifle and a brave would have a tomahawk, spear or knife and a bow or rifle, etc.

Saving Throw: Trailblazers receive a +2 bonus on saving throws vs. poisons, alcohol and rockfalls.

Close Fighter: At outset, the Trailblazer can choose a non-firearm (knife, wood axe etc.) to receive a +1 bonus to hit and damage.

Rowdy: When Trailblazers do come into town, things are apt to get a bit rough if they've had a drink or six. Trailblazers do d6 temporary damage with their fists rather than d3 like everyone else.

Stealth (DEX): When in the wilderness, the Trailblazer is skilled at using the terrain to move without being noticed by his prey or his enemies.

Track (WIS): Trailblazers can spot and follow a trail across almost any ground. They also automatically know which direction is north and can recognize the prints and number of critters that made the tracks.

XP Bonus for Constitution: CON is the Prime Attribute for Trailblazers; which means that a high CON score grants them an additional 5% on XP earned.



CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER RACES, ALIGNMENT & OTHER STUFF

In a more-or-less historical game of Blood & Bullets, there is only one race – human. However, there is no reason you cannot play a fantasy Wild West game, with elves, dwarves, goblins and so on. If you do, then you can use the classes, races and monsters from Swords & Wizardry quite easily in Blood & Bullets (maybe with a few minor adjustments).

Alignment

Typically the protagonists fight to protect their family, their ranchland, their freedom, or their gold. They might fight to stop a cattle baron or a railroad baron from encroaching on their lands. They might protect their homestead from Indian or protect Indians from homesteaders. In some cases, the protagonists might be good-hearted bad guys, gamblers or train robbers stealing from the big banks or wealthy villains. In a western, dangers are usually physical, but there is also a strong undercurrent of moral danger - the threat of giving in to corruption, of losing one's freedom, of turning a blind eye to justice. There's a strong streak of machismo in westerns, but also a sense of honor and gallantry. Often a western addresses themes of good and evil pitted together by using the classic stereotype of the white hats versus the black hats.

The Wild West is full of tales of evil rail barons and greedy ranchers riding roughshod all over the homesteaders and townsfolk trying to make an honest living. Some gunmen are attracted to the power and position their bosses give them. Many lawmen abuse their positions. They like it that ordinary folk are scared of them. These guys are all Evil.

There are also some grey areas; many outlaws, gunmen and killers go on to become lawmen. Many of these guys are Neutral – they aren't killers because they are trying to gain an advantage; they are killers because that's what they do best and there are folk out there that are worse than they are that need to be stopped.

If you're playing a game and want an “unofficial” default, then let the players choose one of three alignments: Lawful, Evil or Neutral. The good guys are Lawful, the bad guys are Evil, and anyone just trying to achieve fame and fortune is Neutral.

Character Retirement

The Referee has the final say on how and when retirement works for the campaign. Some ignore retirement altogether and simply extrapolate the tables to include levels beyond those shown. Each group has their own play style and a preference for a given range of character levels for their games.

CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT

Starting characters in a B&B campaign can be assumed to have the following equipment, rather than purchasing items individually:

Shootists generally begin play with:

- A set of reasonable clothing, including boots and hat
- A duster coat or poncho
- A blanket
- A set of eating utensils
- A good knife
- Any firearm, with a belt or holster, if appropriate
- Two boxes of bullets (100)
- A riding horse with a saddle
- 2d6 dollars

Gamblers generally begin play with:

- A set of fancy clothing, including boots and hat
- A frock coat
- A pack of cards
- A set of dice
- A good knife
- A concealed derringer or pocket pistol
- A box of bullets (50)
- A riding horse with saddle
- 3d6 dollars

Trailblazers generally begin play with:

- A set of well-worn clothing (can be buckskins)
- A duster or fur coat or poncho
- A blanket
- A set of eating utensils
- Preserved meat, 1lb
- 3 cans of beans
- A set of snares
- A pick or a shovel
- A good knife
- A melee weapon or a horse pistol or smoothbore musket, with a box of bullets (50)
- A mule, a pony or a riding horse
- 1d6 furs (for sale, worth 1d6-2 dollars each) or 1d6 dollars

Money

The usual coins are replaced in B&B by Dollars (\$) and Cents. 100 Cents makes a Dollar.

The prices given here are only approximations. Certain goods will be harder to come by in out-of-the way places and may cost more. Others will cost less as they are more readily available or can be bought second-hand.

Table 7: General Goods & Clothing

Gear	Cost (\$)
Banjo	5-15
Beans, can	0.10
Blanket	0.30
Boots, riding	1-5
Buckskins	3
Canteen	0.90
Cards, pack	0.20
Cigars (100)	5
Coat, duster	6
Coat, frock	9
Dice, set	0.30
Hammer	0.60
Harmonica	1-4
Hat	3
Jacket	2-6
Lantern	10
Leather Chaps	4
Oil (lamp), 1 pint	2
Pants	1-2
Pants, fancy	3-5
Poncho	1-3
Preserved Meat, lb	0.20
Rope (50 ft.)	1
Sack (15lb capacity)	1
Shirt	0.75
Shovel	1
Telescope	5
Tent	2-30

Table 8: Transportation

Type	Cost (\$)
Bags, saddle	3-5
Cart/Trap/Wagon	15-200
Donkey	10-15
Horse	20-200
Mule	15-20
Pony	20-50
Raft	10-15
Saddle	4-20
Stagecoach Travel	0.10 – 0.15 per mile
Rail Travel	0.05 – 0.10 per mile

Table 9: Lodgings

Type	Cost (\$)
Beer	0.25 per mug
Boarding House	1 per night, including meal
Meal	0.10-2.00 per serving
Room only	1 per week
Sleazy/Average/Good/Deluxe Hotel	0.25-5 per night
Stables	0.25 per night per horse
Whisky	0.10 per shot
Whisky, bottle	2 – 4

Table 10: Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Weight (lb.)	Cost (\$)
Axe, wood*	1d6+1	8	2
Axe, tomahawk‡	1d6	5	1
Cavalry Saber	1d6	6	10-80
Club	1d6	6	–
Fists**	1d3	-	-
Knife‡	1d6-1	2	1
Bowie Knife	1d6	3	2
Spear†‡	1d6	8	1

* Two-handed weapon

** Temporary damage

† Can be used as either a one-handed or two-handed weapon (+1 damage if used two-handed)

‡ Can be used as either a melee or missile weapon

Table 11: Missile Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Rate of Fire*	Range (feet)	Weight (lb.)	Cost (\$)
Axe, tomahawk	1d6	1	10	5	1
Bow	1d6	2	50	5	4
Knife	1d6-1	1	10	2	1
Spear	1d6	1	20	10	1

* Rate of Fire is the number of projectiles than can be fired per combat round

Note: There is a +2 “to-hit” bonus for missile weapons utilized at short range (x1), a +1 “to-hit” bonus at medium range (x2), and no bonus or penalty for long range (x3) attacks

Table 12: Firearms

Weapon	Damage	Rate of Fire	Capacity	Range (feet)	Weight (lb.)	Cost
Pistol, derringer	1d6-1	2	1 or 2	10	1	3
Pistol, pocket	1d6-1	2	5	30	2	9
Pistol, belt	1d6	2	5 or 6	50	2.5	12
Pistol, heavy	1d6+1	2	6	75	3	16
“Horse” pistol	1d6	1/2	1	25	4	1
Carbine	1d6+1	2	7	200	7	22
Repeating Rifle	2d6*	2	15	300	9	30
Long Rifle	2d6+1*	1/2	1	400	10	20
Buffalo Rifle	2d6+2*	1/2	1	500	13	16
Smoothbore Musket	1d6	1/2	1	80	15	6
Scattergun	2d6**	1	1 or 2	30	8	15
Gun Belt	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pistol Holster	-	-	-	-	-	0.50
Rifle Holster	-	-	-	-	-	2.50
Bullets, 100	-	-	-	-	-	1.25
Shotgun Shells, 100	-	-	-	-	-	1
Musket Balls, 100	-	-	-	-	-	0.50

*Roll 2d6, take the highest result, adding 1 or 2 as indicated

** The spread of shot is 5’ either side of the point aimed at. Therefore, one shot can attack several targets. However, at beyond the first 30ft, targets get to make a save (DEX mod applies) for half damage

Note: There is a +2 “to-hit” bonus for missile weapons utilized at short range (x1), a +1 “to-hit” bonus at medium range (x2), and no bonus or penalty for long range (x3) attacks

You will note the firearms listed are generic; this is more straightforward than listing the many different makes and model of weaponry that appears in the Old West.

Pistol, Derringer: These are small highly concealable pistols, usually only one or two shots, for very close self-defence. They are often carried for self-defence by ladies or gamblers.

Pistol, Pocket: With longer barrels than derringers, these handguns are still reasonably concealable. With only comparatively short range and stopping power, they are not used by serious gunfighters.

Pistol, Belt: The true handgun of the Wild West; carried by many - stuck in a belt, coat pocket or in a holster.

Pistol, Heavy: Larger handguns; with long barrels, heavier calibers and therefore greater stopping power. Used by serious gunmen.

“Horse” Pistol: An old single-shot flintlock weapon, usually only carried because they were very cheap.

Carbine: Shorter versions of repeating rifles, these are particularly used by cavalry. Examples would be the Spencer, the Burnside and the Sharps.

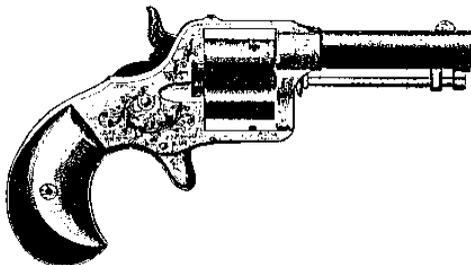
Repeating Rifle: Rapid-firing, breach-loaded, lever-action rifles; of the Henry or Winchester type.

Long Rifle: Rifled muzzle-loading muskets used during the Civil War, examples would be the Springfield, Fayetteville and Enfield. These examples all fire a .58 caliber minie ball.

Buffalo Rifle: Buffalo rifle generally refers to large-caliber, generally single-shot black powder cartridge firearms which were used to hunt the American Bison (or "buffalo"); e.g. the Hawken or the Sharps

Smoothbore Musket: Muzzle-loaded, flintlocks firing lead balls, like the Model 1812, 1822 or 1835 Musket, or the British Brown Bess. Some of these old weapons are still around and owned by those too poor to afford a better gun.

Scattergun: Scatterguns are smoothbore firearms. They can be devastating at close ranges and because of the spread of shot can be used to take down more than one target with one shot. Often used for defence by stagecoach drivers.



CHAPTER 5: PLAYING THE GAME

Once characters have been created, the Referee will describe where the characters are and what they can see. The game might start in a rough mining camp at the foot of a range of hills, a cow town at the end of a trail, a fort, a saloon or on a train heading for Santa Fe. From that point on, Players describe what their characters do. Playing a few hands of poker, challenging the guy at the bar, robbing the train, talking to other Player Characters (PCs) or Non-Player Characters (NPCs) controlled by the Referee—all of these kinds of actions are decided by the players. The Referee then describes what happens as a result. The rules below are guidelines handling events like combat, gaining experience, movement, healing, dying, and other important parts of the game.

Basically, you and the Referee work together, with the Referee handling the details of a world full of hardships, and you handling what your character does in it. The epic story of your character's rise to greatness (or death in the effort) is yours to create in the Referee's world.

Gaining Experience

Western heroes are usually bonded together by friendship and a common past. Their tools for accomplishing their quest are guns and horses, but also loyalty and moral righteousness. In some westerns, the tools may be tainted—for example, the protagonist may be reluctant to pick up a gun again, for fear of becoming a murderer or descending back into a dark past. Alternatively, the protagonists may be scoundrels, using questionable tools and strategies to achieve their goal.

Characters are awarded XP for success in their endeavors. NPCs have set XP values in their descriptions, which is acquired by PCs for overcoming those characters. That doesn't mean killing them necessarily, it can mean outwitting them, capturing them for the reward, beating them at poker or otherwise defeating their schemes. One dollar piece acquired is also equal to one XP. Experience is awarded for accumulating money because every dollar gained by a character is an index of his player's skill and ingenuity.

Each character class has a Prime Attribute listed in its description, and the character creation process details how to use your attributes to determine the character's total XP bonus.

Time

There will be times when the PCs are travelling between towns or resting up somewhere and nothing much is happening. When this is the case, you don't necessarily want to play out every minute or even hour of that passing of time. In that case, the Referee will simply rule that an hour, a week or even a month

(or longer) passes in the lives of the PCs. At other times, during a gunfight scene in particular, more specific rulings on the passage of time are required - the “turn” and “combat round.” A turn (lasting ten minutes) is used to track and measure actions, movement and resources when our intrepid adventurers are in dangerous situations. The shorter combat round (lasting about 10 seconds) is used in the midst of a gunfight or saloon brawl to allow for a faster blow-by-blow account of the action. There are 60 combat rounds in a turn.

Movement

Base movement rate for all races is calculated on the table below in tens of feet per turn, allowing for two moves per turn.

Table 13: Movement Rate

Weight Carried (lb.)	Move
0–75	12
76–100	9
101–150	6
151–300	3

Table 14: Movement Rate Adjustments

Movement Type	Adjustment
Careful	Half of Average Rate
Normal	Average Rate
Running	Double Average Rate

Combat

When the party of drifters comes into contact with enemies, the order of events in the combat round is as follows:

1. The Referee determines if one side or the other is entitled to a free attack or move as a result of surprise—this is either a judgment or a die roll of some kind, depending on the circumstances.
2. Determine initiative. One roll is made for each PC. The Referee rolls for a whole group of NPCs. However, important NPCs get a separate roll, just like PCs.
3. The character (or NPCs) with initiative acts first (missile fire, movement, melee attacks, etc.) and results take effect.
4. Then the next highest initiative acts and so on down the line.
5. Individuals can withhold their initiative and wait for an opportunity to act at any time after they were due to act. NPCs can’t do this.

6. The round is complete; keep turn order for the next round if the battle has not been resolved.

Determine Initiative

At the beginning of the first combat round, each side rolls initiative on a d20, with any modifiers. The highest acts first, shooting, moving, attacking, hiding, running away etc. He can withhold his action until any time later in the combat round (interrupting another individual's action even). Then the next highest, and so on.

Initiative rolls may result in a tie. When this happens, the individual with the highest dexterity acts first. If they are still equal, the highest level determines who goes first. Otherwise they act at exactly the same time. The Referee may handle this situation in any way he chooses—with one caveat. The damage inflicted by combatants during simultaneous initiative is inflicted even if one of the combatants dies during the round. It is possible for two combatants to kill each other in this situation.

The Attack Roll

The most important rule to understand about combat is the attack roll.

To attack with a weapon, the player rolls a d20 and adds any bonuses to the result. These “to-hit” bonuses may include a strength bonus (for attacks with hand held weapons) or a dexterity bonus (for attacks with missile weapons). The player then subtracts any “to-hit” penalties they might have from their roll.

If the attack roll is equal to or higher than the DC of the opponent, the attack hits.

20's and 1's

A “natural” roll of 20 is always a hit and always causes maximum damage (as if a natural 6 had been rolled, see Damage and Death, below).

A “natural” roll of 1 is always a miss.

Specific Situations

The following are a compilation of guidelines and instructions for handling certain, specific situations that might arise during combat:

Damage

If an attack hits, it inflicts damage. Roll the weapon's damage die (which will be a d6, sometimes with a + or – to the result) and add any STR modifiers for melee weapons. The damage is subtracted from the defender's hit point total.

If a 6 is rolled, you roll the die again (this time do not add or subtract modifiers for strength or for the weapon) adding the result to the first die roll. You may roll the extra damage die in this way once per 2 levels of character (round down).

For example, a Trailblazer of level 5 shoots a bandit, rolling a 5 and a 6 for damage with his buffalo rifle. He takes the 6 (the best one) as his result and rolls it again, getting another 6. As he is 5th level, he can roll it again. This time he gets a 2, for damage of 14 (6+6+2) and then adds +2 for the buffalo rifle's extra damage for 16.

Death

When a character (or creature) is hit, the amount of damage taken is deducted from his hit points. When HP reaches 0, the character gets a saving roll vs. death to see whether he dies. There is a modifier of -1 to the roll for every HP the character is below 0. If he fails the roll, he is dead. If he succeeds, he is just unconscious and requires medical help.

Healing

A character will recover 1 full HP per level per day of uninterrupted rest.

Damage from fists is classed as temporary damage and heals per hour rather than per day.

Binding Wounds

Referees can allow characters to bind 1d3 HP worth of wounds following a battle.

Note that the character can only recover HP lost during this particular battle. Recovered HP cannot exceed the uninjured maximum amount.

Cover

An opponent may be using cover to shoot from. This will give an attacker a negative modifier to the roll, from -1 to -4 on their "to-hit" check, determined by the Referee.

Melee Attack

A melee attack is an attack with a hand-held weapon such as a sword, spear, or dagger. A character's optional strength bonuses "to-hit" and damage are added to melee attacks. Two combatants within five feet of each other are considered to be "in melee."

Missile Attack

Missile attacks are attacks with ranged weapons such as guns, bows, or thrown axes. A character's dexterity bonus for missile attacks is added to the "to-hit" roll when the character is using missile weapons. When using missiles to fire into melee, it is not possible to choose which opponent (or friend!) will receive the brunt of the attack.

Morale

The majority of NPCs will not continue to fight a hopeless battle and will seek to retreat, surrender, or flee. The Referee will decide when NPCs abandon battle and retreat, based upon the situation and the situation. Referees should also use morale to determine the actions and loyalty of hirelings or other companion NPCs.

Negotiation and Diplomacy

Some combats can be averted with a few well chosen words (even lies). If the party is outmatched or the NPCs don't seem likely to be carrying much in the way of loot, the party might elect to brazen their way through in an attempt to avoid combat or at least delay it until more favorable conditions arise.

Loyalty

The Referee may wish to make "loyalty checks" for NPCs put into dangerous situations or ones offered bribes to change sides during a conflict. When a loyalty check is made, roll 3d6 and consult the Loyalty table for the result. Remember that these checks can be modified by a Player's Charisma score. Gamblers using their "Silvertongue" ability can persuade or bluff NPCs in the short term but this isn't quite the same thing as having loyal henchmen.

Table 15: Loyalty

Roll	Loyalty
3	Traitor
4-5	-2 on next loyalty check
6-8	-1 on next loyalty check
9-12	Average
13-15	+1 on next loyalty check
16-17	+2 on next loyalty check
18	Loyal

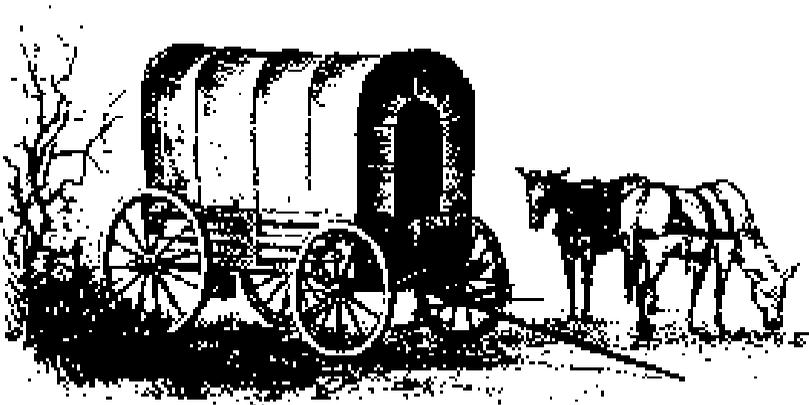
Good treatment, respect, and a fair share of money earned should garner bonuses to loyalty checks, while abuse, physical or otherwise, will bring about penalties, abandonment, or worse. NPCs should be treated as distinct individuals, and not mere extensions of the Player Character.

Saving Throws

From time to time, a spell or some other kind of hazard requires you to make a "saving throw." A successful saving throw means that the character avoids a threat or lessens its effect. Each character class has a saving throw target number which gets lower and lower as the character gains levels. To make a saving throw, roll a d20. If the result is equal to or greater than the character's saving throw target number, the saving throw is successful.

Remember

Blood & Bullets is a free-form roleplaying game, meaning that there aren't very many rules. The Referee is responsible for handling situations that aren't covered by the rules, making fair evaluations of what the characters do and deciding what happens as a result. This is not a game in which the players are "against" the Referee, even though the Referee is responsible for creating tricky traps, dangerous situations, and running the PCs opponents and other people they meet. In fact, the players and the Referee cooperate with each other to create an entertaining adventure, with the Referee creating the setting and the players developing the story of the heroes. If they aren't skillful and smart, the epic might be very short. But it's not the Referee's job to defeat the players—it's his job to provide interesting (and dangerous) challenges, and then guide the story fairly.



CHAPTER 6: RUNNING THE GAME

Running a game of B&B is a lot easier than running most other role-playing games, simply because there are not as many rules and your own discretion overrides them anyway. Most situations are handled by making “common sense” decisions concerning what happens next.

For example, if there are a bunch of outlaws around the next corner and the players decide not to go around that corner, it’s up to the Referee to determine whether or not it makes sense for the outlaws to rush around the corner and attack—or whether their orders are to simply stay where they are. If a player decides that his character is going to jump through a wall of fire, with several sticks of dynamite in his pockets, it’s up to the Referee to determine whether or not they explode.

This means “making up” a lot of stuff on the spot. If you’re not a good storyteller or if you’re not up to doing a lot of creative thinking on the fly, it might be better that you try a different game—one that provides more rules and guidance for every little situation that might arise. But if you’re a good storyteller, creative and fair, B&B’s small, spartan rule-set frees up your creativity to create a role-playing experience completely different from the type of game that depends on a multitude of rules.

B&B also frees up your creativity in terms of customizing the game. Unlike a more complex game, you can add house rules wherever you want to without accidentally messing up something else buried in the rules. If you want to use critical hits and fumbles, add ‘em in. You won’t break anything—there’s not that much to break!

Designing an Adventure

Basically, the “adventure” is just the setting for the game—usually a map and then notes about certain locations on that map. As the Players tell you where their characters go and what they do, you’re referring to the map and your notes to describe what happens as a result. Don’t try to plan for all contingencies—it’s guaranteed that the players will do something unexpected during the adventure and you’ll just have to roll with it, thinking on your feet and making up new things as you go. Just as you challenge the Players with adventure, they challenge you to keep up with their collective creativity.

Creating a Campaign

The setting is the North American Old West, around the first half of the 1800s, often but not always west of the Mississippi. Tombstone, Arizona; Dodge, Kansas; Deadwood, South Dakota; Durango, Colorado; Jackson Hole, Wyoming; Cottonwood, California ... the names have their own desolate

beauty, conjuring up images of dusty streets, weathered wood, sweating horses and the smell of cowhide and gun oil. Often westerns "cross the border" to include Mexico or Mexican-owned states.

A campaign is the world beyond the adventure - the cities, railroads, prairies, and mountains of the Wild West. The players will almost certainly want their characters to explore the wilderness, visit cow towns, rob the bank and do all sorts of things in the world. At the beginning of the game, you might want to sketch out a map of a single mining camp (as the starting point) and some of the surrounding area (the location of the first adventure - a steep-sided canyon, perhaps?) As the players move their characters around from adventure to adventure, you can expand the little map into an entire area with other townships, rail lines, mines and other places of interest.

If you want to take a shortcut, you can set your entire campaign in a semi-fictional world created by the author of one of your favorite stories; for example, the stories of Elmore Leonard, Robert B Parker (The Virgil Cole/Everett Hitch Series), Louis L'Amour, Ralph Compton (The Trail Drive series) and Ralph Cotton.

Experience Points

There are many alternative ways for Referees to award XP other than just for killing their enemies. For example, active participation in the campaign might warrant experience for each hour of real-time play, as could solving puzzles and aiding allies. A particularly clever solution or epic victory might warrant double the normal XP amount awarded, while an abysmal failure might merit half.

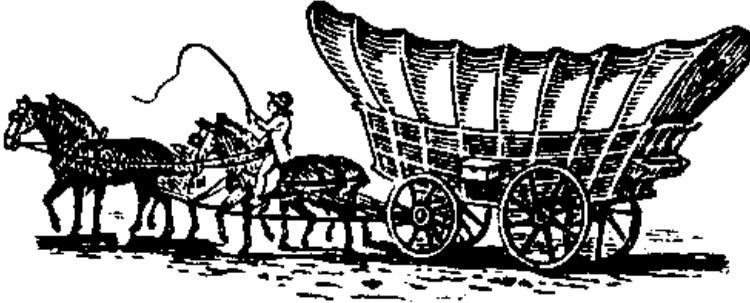
Some Referees make all earned XP a part of a community total to be divided evenly, since not all the characters have the same opportunities in a given adventure. Others prefer a more competitive game, whereby each player earns XP according to individual accomplishments.

If you find that whatever system you're using leads the players toward bad decisions - seeking out unnecessary combat or looking for traps to spring - you might consider adjusting your system. This is true for the "official" system of awarding XP as well. Remember, the Referee is the ultimate judge of what works best for a game and any rule can be changed to fit the group.

Scale of Advancement

This rules set was designed with the notion that 4th level characters are "heroic" and thus the tables were capped at level 10. A Referee who wishes to extend the tables to higher levels is encouraged to do so if it fits the style of the campaign.

CHAPTER 7: ON THE TRAIL



The characters in B&B are assumed to be drifters, wandering from one town to the next, seeking employment, adventure or perhaps, avoiding the law. They are assumed to travel mainly in wild out of the way places; over the prairie, in the mountains or across the desert. The states they will pass through will be Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Mostly they will be hitting small lawless townships where their reputation hasn't reached and where the chance of a violent death is high.

Wilderness Encounters

Unless the actual journey is important to the adventure (perhaps you've got an ambush set up, or they get lost in the wilderness, or they are attacked by a wild bear, or there is an avalanche in a mountain pass or the characters meet someone on the trail who they can trade with or knows something or becomes an enemy etc.), simply state to them that "after several days on the trail, you ride wearily into the next town..."

However, if you are short of ideas and you'd like to play out some part of the characters travels, here are a few ideas for encounters on the trail. Use the tables as a guide - be prepared to change the result to suit the situation, perhaps rolling again or adjusting the subject or the numbers.

Roll a d6 once in the morning, once in the afternoon and once at night. A 6 means that the PCs have had an encounter. Roll a d6 again, to see which table to check:

1

1	There is a landslide (DEX ST allowed)
2	A PC accidentally steps on a bear trap (DEX ST allowed)
3	There is a bison stampede heading toward the PCs
4	PCs see a runaway coach or wagon with passengers in danger
5	PCs come across bandits/Indians attacking homesteaders/train/coach
6	A Travelling Salesman may try to sell to/rip off the PCs

2

1	An Indian scout/ homesteader/mountain man/bear caught in a bear trap
2	A posse (1d6+4 rowdies, led by a gunslinger) hunting outlaws – perhaps they mistake them for the PCs
3	Smoke in the distance over treetops (burning farmstead? campfire?)
4	A bounty hunter bringing in an “outlaw” that one of the PCs recognizes
5	Cattle rustlers (1 per PC +1) with a small herd of a two dozen longhorns
6	A young lady rushes out of the underbrush all disheveled – she has been attacked by a well-known outlaw who has headed into the nearest town

3-4

1	Bear, Black
2	Bear, Grizzly
3	Cougar
4	Rattler
5	Wolf
6	Wolf Pack (2d6)

5-6

1	Indian Raiding Party (2d6 Braves)	Will be keen to attack
2	Indian Hunting Party (d6 Scouts)	Won't necessarily attack
3	Outlaws (1 per PC + d6)	Will attempt to rob PCs
4	Gunfighter	Might have heard of PC
5	Prospectors (d6)	Suspicious of PCs
6	Rowdies (d6+2)	Looking for trouble

Coming to Town

There were many towns in the Old West that don't exist today; long forgotten mining camps, rail stops, stage stops, post offices, farming communities, logging camps, army forts and trading posts.

To see what type of town or community the characters have arrived at, roll on the following table:

Table 16: Settlement Type

Roll 2d6	Settlement Type
2	Rail Stop*
3	Ferry Point*
4-5	Logging Camp
6-7	Mining Camp
8-9	Farming Community
10-11	Trading Post
12	Military Post/Fort

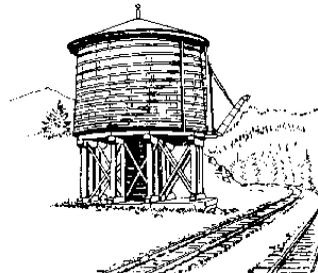
*These might change around if your campaign is set in a later period

Note: Some towns fulfill two or more functions, so a rail stop might also be a mining camp and an important trading post. However, the result tells you why the settlement was established or what its primary function is.

Women are few in these townships; those that do live in the mining camps tend to be soiled doves; earning their keep by entertaining the men, possibly even travelling from camp to camp.

Rail Stop: A rail stop is either on a railroad track or at the end of a railroad track. It might just stop here for water or sand (or refreshment for the train driver) before continuing on its way, but more than likely it stops here because there is a nearby community or a settlement has built up around it. The telegraph often follows the railroads, so larger stations will have a telegraph office.

Ferry Point: A ferry point is established because it is on a main route to or from somewhere where people want to get to. It can be a simple raft that is fixed to a length of rope directly across the other side of the river and pulled across using the rope. This type of crossing would suggest either a single

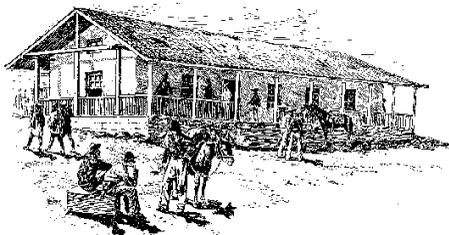


homesteader who doubles as a ferryman or a small community. Or it can be a larger boat that perhaps ferries people up or down the river a short way, maybe to serve the workers from some of the camps in the area, to take them into the nearest town when they have some free recreation time.

Logging Camp: These settlements often simply consist of a cookhouse, bunkhouses, shower/latrines and little else. Logging camps are found in the heavily wooded mountain regions. They will use the rivers or rail to get the lumber down to the sawmills. Lumberjacks were often German or Scandinavian immigrants. Their camps are rough places; the life is hard, so they play hard.

Mining Camp: The lure of gold in the Old West beckons thousands of hungry settlers eager to stake a claim. Unfortunately, the gold and silver veins are elusive and apt to dry up with little notice. Miners and prospectors are forced to move often in search of the next big lode. They leave behind them hundreds of empty or near-empty mining camps and townships.

Trading Post: A trading post might be a simple shack where mountain men and Native Americans come to sell their furs and trinkets and to buy ammunition and other goods. It might include a washhouse and basic dining facilities. Or it might be a fort. A settlement might have grown up around it but it is certainly somewhere where people gather at least for short periods. It could be pretty empty most of the time.



Farming Community: Homesteaders and ranchers need a central point to gather; for church, schooling and even just to socialize. These places often go on to become larger townships as more and more people arrive to cater to the local community. These places are often the least lawless of the types of townships that are found in the Old West as they are family and community oriented.

Military Post/Fort: Forts are established to serve the local community to protect them from Native American raids or to serve as a base to strike out against Native American uprisings. They also serve to provide a central point for the local community for trade or communications (post or telegraph). Military posts are smaller and established by a fort for a specific purpose, maybe to guard a well used trade route or to protect a valuable mine or settlement that is some way away from the main fort.

Finding Adventure

Western themes include duty, freedom, law versus chaos, the individual versus the large corporation, and honor versus efficiency. Some common western characters are sheriffs, drunkards, gamblers, card sharks, mysterious strangers, rustlers, horse thieves, Indians, prostitutes (with or without hearts of gold), gunslingers, mountain men, gold miners, doctors, school teachers, saloon keepers, piano players, and barefoot children. Some common events are:

Fights (brawls or gunfights) in a

- saloon
- corral
- gambling hall
- top of a stagecoach
- top of a train
- desert, while on horseback

Gathering up or opposing a

- posse
- lynching party
- massacre (e.g., of or by Indians)
- new cattle ranch
- new railroad

Escape from a

- jail
- Indian tribe
- Texas Ranger
- Pinkerton
- lynching party

Once the characters have entered a settlement, the Referee must give them something to do. There are various ways to do this; the characters could seek out the adventure or the adventure could come to the characters.

The following tables help the Referee to decide some of the basics of the adventure. Roll a d6 for which table to use:

(Use the tables as a guide - be prepared to change the result to suit the situation, perhaps rolling again or adjusting the subject or the numbers).

1-2

1	The township is having problems with a gang of outlaws and will pay the PCs to protect their village. They don't have much money for the PCs
2	There is a bank robbery going on as the PCs hit town. The town marshal is trying to prevent hem getting away with the bank's money
3	The local ranch owner/mine boss comes to town in force (2x the number of PCs) to check out the new arrivals in town and to lay down the "rules"
4	The saloon owner has been treating his girls badly and one of them seeks help from the PCs
5	A young boy asks the PC if he can borrow his gun to shoot a snake – he actually wants to kill the man that killed his Pa
6	When the travelling acting troupe leaves town, it is discovered that a lot of things have gone missing (including things belonging to the PCs)

3-4

1	The local newspaperman wants to interview the PCs about their recent exploits for his newssheet
2	A wanted poster on the wall outside the saloon looks like one of the PCs and the local lawman (and deputy?) comes into the saloon to arrest him
3	An old prospector is found stabbed to death just before he had staked his claim. He had been telling everyone in the saloon he'd found gold
4	Two local gangs (about 4 or 5 on each side) are shooting it out down by the corral and the town has no lawman
5	The local lawman is seen taking bungs from the evil ranch owner, after one of the saloon gals is found dead (strangled)
6	Local businesses are being forced to pay "insurance" to the local gang, or else they are beaten up or their businesses burnt down

5-6

1	PCs hear that a renowned gunslinger is in town (looking for them?). Make the shootist at least 2-3 levels higher than the PCs
2	d6+6 Rowdies from the local ranch/mines/railroad turn up in town shooting, hollerin' and generally causing trouble
3	A posse is being gathered to go into the hills to bring in a large gang of outlaws that have been seen in the area
4	A lynch mob has got the wrong man (supposedly for horse theft)
5	PCs get caught up in a range war/mine war between two powerful wealthy landowners/mine owners each wanting to get the PCs to join their cause
6	A soiled dove falls for one of the PCs and won't leave him alone

CHAPTER 8: CRITTERS & OPPONENTS

There's not a lot of detail given about the critters, because you know what they are and what they generally look like. If you don't you can look them up readily enough.

Opponents are all generic versions of the types of folk the characters will meet on the trail or in the settlements of the Old West. You can create tougher versions of these folk by giving them experience levels and extra HD.

The following is a quick reference guide for how to read critter and NPC descriptions:

Defence Class

DC is similar to DC for the PCs. A small fast critter may have a higher DC than a larger slower critter.

Attacks

"Attacks" lists the number of attacks an opponent has and the damage they inflict. Most monsters have one attack and inflict 1d6 damage—there are however, some exceptions.

Experience Points

"Experience Points" are presented after a monster's Hit Dice Equivalent (HDE) rating, and list the number of XP the adventuring party gains as a result of killing the creature. In some cases, however, the Referee may choose to award experience points for defeating a creature without killing it (circumventing it by creative means, capturing it to bring home, etc.). Some monsters have multiple Experience Points listed—this is because certain monsters have a range of hit dice. Order is always from lowest HD to highest HD.

Hit Dice

"Hit Dice" is the number of dice (d6) rolled to determine an individual creature's HP. If there is a plus or minus after the number, add or subtract that number once from the total rolled.

Note: In B&B, the monster's normal "to-hit" bonus is equal to its hit dice (capped at +15). For example, a monster with 3 HD attacks with a +3 "to-hit" bonus.

Move

"Move" is the monster's movement rate and is handled like it is for PCs.

Saving Throw

“Saving Throw” isn’t one of the entries, but all critters have a saving throw. It is the number on the d20 the critter needs to equal or exceed in order to avoid a threat or lessen its effect. It is found by subtracting the critter’s HD from 19. For example, a critter with 4 HD has a saving throw of 15.

Special

“Special” is just a “flag” of sorts for the Referee that serves as a reminder that a monster has a special ability.



Critter Descriptions

Contained herein are a bunch of critters presented in alphabetical order.

Bear, Black

Defence Class: 13

Hit Dice: 3+6

Attacks: Claws, Bite

Special: Grapple

Move: 14

XP: 150



Bear, Grizzly

Defence Class: 14

Hit Dice: 5+6

Attacks: Claws, Bite

Special: Grapple

Move: 14

XP: 400

Bison

Defence Class: 12

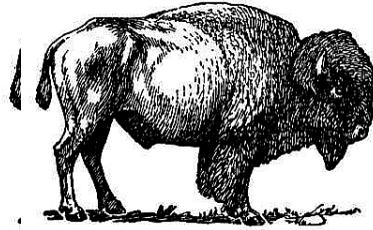
Hit Dice: 6+4

Attacks: Horns

Special: Trample

Move: 14

XP: 400



Cougar

Defence Class: 14

Hit Dice: 3+1

Attacks: Claws, Bite

Special: Pounce

Move: 14

XP: 120

Donkey

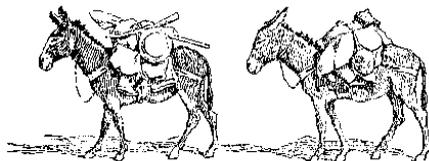
Defence Class: 11

Hit Dice: 1+2

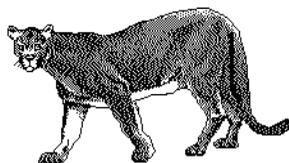
Attacks: Hoof, d3

Special: None

Move: 12

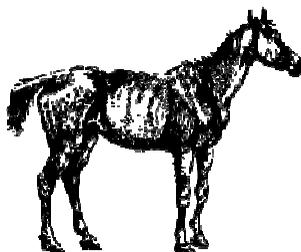


Horse, Riding
Defence Class: 12
Hit Dice: 2+1
Attacks: Hoof
Special: None
Move: 18



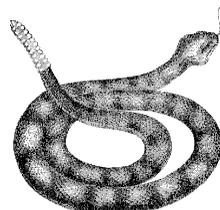
Mule
Defence Class: 11
Hit Dice: 3+1
Attacks: Hoof
Special: None
Move: 12

Pony
Defence Class: 12
Hit Dice: 2
Attacks: Hoof, d3
Special: None
Move: 18



Snake, Rattler
Defence Class: 15
Hit Dice: ½
Attacks: Weapon
Special: Venom
Move: 9
XP: 15

Wolf
Defence Class: 13
Hit Dice: 1+1
Attacks: Bite
Special: Scent
Move: 16
XP: 20



NPC Types

Brave

Defence Class: 12

Hit Dice: 1+1

Attacks: Spear, tomahawk +1

Special: Trick riding

Move: 12

XP: 20

Dandy

Defence Class: 11

Hit Dice: 1-1

Attacks: Pocket pistol

Special: None

Move: 9

XP: 10

Gunfighter

Defence Class: 12

Hit Dice: 1+1

Attacks: Pistol +1

Special: +1 initiative

Move: 12

XP: 20

Mountain Man

Defence Class: 10

Hit Dice: 2

Attacks: Long Rifle, Horse Pistol or Wood

Axe

Special: Conceal

Move: 9

XP: 30

Outlaw

Defence Class: 11

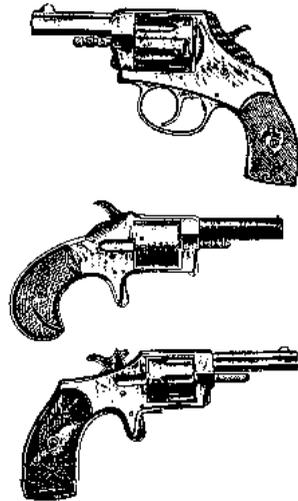
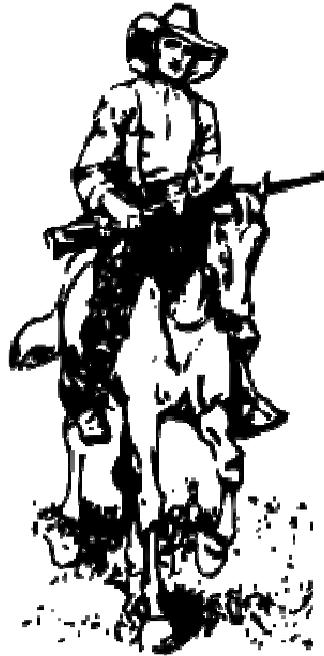
Hit Dice: 1

Attacks: Pistol or rifle

Special: Wanted

Move: 9

XP: 15



Rowdy
Defence Class: 10
Hit Dice: 1
Attacks: Fist or Pistol
Special: None
Move: 9
XP: 15

Soiled Dove
Defence Class: 10
Hit Dice: 1-1
Attacks: None or derringer
Special: Seductive
Move: 9
XP: 10

Scout
Defence Class: 13
Hit Dice: 1
Attacks: Bow, knife
Special: Stealth, Track
Move: 12
XP: 20

Soldier, Cavalry
Defence Class: 11
Hit Dice: 1+1
Attacks: Carbine, sabre
Special: None
Move: 12
XP: 20



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Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, Bruce R. Cordell, John D. Rateliff, Thomas Reid, James Wyatt, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

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