

# Gamer Basic Moves

## Argue

When your L1 Gamer argues with other Gamers or the DM, roll+Loud.

- **On an 8 or Less:** You make a nuisance of yourself, and the other side stands their ground. Take 1 Stress.
- **On a 9 to 11:** You're able to more or less get your way. The one you're arguing with must give you a concession to what you wanted, but pick one:
  - You have to offer an in-game concession or *just roll*.
  - You have to offer a real-life (L1) concession.
  - Arguing about it is stressful; take 1 Stress.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** You're able to get what you want, within reason.

## Just Roll

When all else fails and the DM tells you to roll a die, roll+Lucky.

- **On an 8 or Less:** You fumble the roll badly. Your Adventurer misses out on something important, takes the full brunt of whatever they were facing, or otherwise suffers.
- **On a 9 to 11:** You roll well enough that you don't suffer the worst possible fate, or it turns out that the DM was just messing with you.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** You roll absurdly well (probably a natural 20), and the ZM picks one:
  - You stumble across valuables! Gain 1 Loot.
  - You see the beauty of the cosmos and briefly commune with the gods.
  - You deftly avoid a source of danger.
  - You achieve something impressive that wouldn't normally be possible.

## Kill Things

When you have your L2 character kill things, roll+Numbers.

- **On an 8 or Less:** You get yourself in trouble! Take 1 Harm.
- **On a 9 to 11:** You successfully make a pretty typical attack, causing 1 Harm. You can take 1 Harm or spend 1 Loot to instead cause 2 Harm.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** Critical hit! You cause 2 Harm!

## Parley

When you have your L2 character *intimidate* or *negotiate* with an NPC that you have some leverage over, roll+Numbers.

- **On an 8 or Less:** The NPC becomes hostile, reports what's going on to a superior, just plain stonewalls you, or is otherwise uncooperative.
- **On a 9 to 11:** The NPC will only budge if you either offer them something immediately or make a sufficiently convincing promise.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** You rolled especially well, and the NPC is more or less on your side for the moment.

## Prepare

When you have your L2 Adventurer character take time to make preparations to deal with a situation, roll+Clever.

- **On an 8 or Less:** You waste time or make a serious misjudgment, leaving you unprepared.
- **On a 9 to 11:** Your preparations give you an important edge. Pick one:
  - Gain advantage on your next roll to deal with the situation.
  - Reduce the Harm and other adverse effects that it would've caused you.
  - Dampen or briefly negate an enemy's ability or advantage.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** By leveraging available resources and/or sheer cunning, you're able to do an excellent job of preparing for the situation at hand. Pick one:
  - Gain advantage on rolls to carry out your preparations.
  - Ignore the Harm and other adverse effects that it would've caused you.
  - Negate an ability or advantage that an enemy had.

## Read the Room

When your L1 Gamer character reads the room, roll+Clever. If you get an accurate answer and use it well, you get advantage on the relevant roll.

- **On an 8 or Less:** Ask a question from the 9-11 list, but your Gamer receives (and for the moment believes) an entirely incorrect answer.
- **On a 9 to 11:** Ask one question, and the relevant L0 player must answer truthfully:
  - (To the DM) Are you just making this part up as you go?
  - (To the DM) How dangerous is this next part?
  - What could I give you to change your mind?
  - What would make you chill out?
  - Why did you do that?
  - (To Everyone) Who thinks that was bullshit?
- **On a 12 or Higher:** As per 9-11, but ask 2 questions.

## Take Their Stuff

When you take stuff from dead/incapacitated enemies or treasure hoards, roll+Lucky.

- **On an 8 or Less:** It turns out there isn't much of value.
- **On a 9 to 11:** You get an average haul; take 1 Loot.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** You luck out and find about the best loot this type of enemy could plausibly have. Pick one:
  - Take 2 Loot.
  - Take 1 Loot and get a MacGuffin.

## Try Something Ridiculous

When you try something totally implausible and ridiculous, roll+Lucky.

- **On an 8 or Less:** Your stunt fails spectacularly. Take 1 Harm.
- **On a 9 to 11:** You're able to pull it off, but it's costly. Pick one:
  - Spend 1 Loot.
  - Take 1 Harm.
  - You attract unwanted attention.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** You roll exceptionally well (probably a natural 20), and are able to smoothly pull off something that normally shouldn't be possible.

## Use an Item

When you use an item in your (L2) inventory to help you in your adventure, spend 1 Loot, describe what item or valuables you picked up previously that will help you here, and pick 1:

- Prevent or remove 1 Harm from your L2 character or someone else's.
- Get advantage on the roll for a suitable move.

If you have a MacGuffin, it lets you accomplish something specific in the (L2) story that you wouldn't be able to otherwise. This could be a key that gets you into the villain's lair, amulets to let you travel underwater, or whatever.

Adventurers can freely exchange Loot points and MacGuffins among themselves, though this takes a small amount of time and free hands.

## Stress Fallout

- **Act Out In-Game:** Have your L2 character do something outrageous and possibly disturbing in-game. (In the case of the DM, they have one or more NPCs do something outrageous or otherwise make life difficult for the L2 Adventurers.)
- **Do Something Petty:** You do something petty, intended to annoy others. One other L1 character of your choice takes 1 Stress.
- **Threaten to Quit:** The stress leads you to make an unserious threat to quit playing in this dungeon fantasy game.

## Damage Fallout

- **Cursed:** Your L2 character suffers a debilitating curse. You have disadvantage on all Numbers and Lucky rolls until you can find a way to lift the curse. This can be accomplished with a MacGuffin, with a favor from a powerful NPC, or by visiting a holy temple in-game and spending 2 Loot.
- **Expensive Resurrection:** The party is able to revive your L2 character, but it's costly to do so. They must spend a total of 5 Loot, but the party can owe a significant favor to an NPC for each point of Loot they are unable or unwilling to pay.
- **Permadeath:** Your L2 character outright dies and no one revives them. The other players can decide what to do with your Loot. Create a new L2 character, and reassign your Character Moves if you wish. Your L1 character won't be able to participate in the L2 game until the new character is done and the DM brings them in.

# Gamer Sheet

## Gamer Name

## Gamer Look

- Scrawny, average build, stocky, athletic, overweight, tiny, tall
- Costume, geeky T-shirt and jeans, girly clothes, work clothes
- Elaborate dice collection, fancy dice tower, handheld video game, laptop, plush toy

## Gamer Goal

## Gamer Quirk

## Adventurer Name

## Adventurer Race

## Adventurer Class

## Adventurer Alignment

## Adventurer Patron Deity

## Adventurer Quirk

## Adventurer Tags (Pick 3)

## Stats

Assign 8 points, giving each stat a value from 1-4.



Clever



Loud



Lucky



Numbers

## Other Values



Stress



Harm



Loot

## Class Feature (Pick 2)

### ○Buff □□

Your adventurer has special abilities that make other characters more effective. Up to 2 times per session you can do one of the following:

- **Designated Victim:** Designate a target; for the rest of the scene you and your allies have advantage to attack that target.
- **Luck Boost:** For the rest of the scene, any time you or an ally roll for an L2 move, they can reroll individual dice that come up as 1.
- **Second Chance:** If you or an ally have just rolled an 8 or less for an L2 move, they get to roll again.

### ○Healing □□

Your L2 character has healing abilities, whether divine magic or (if you're playing That Version), inspirational/shouty healing powers, or maybe just a very good supply of healing potions. Twice per session, you can use a healing ability to remove 2 points of Harm from a single L2 character or 1 point of Harm each from a small group of characters.

### ○Sneak

When you *have your L2 character sneak past enemies*, roll+Numbers:

- **On an 8 or Less:** You fumble your stealth roll, and your L2 character is blatantly obvious to anyone around them.
- **On a 9 to 11:** You get into a position where you're concealed, but you can't do much without exposing yourself to danger. Pick one:
  - You're able to set up for an ambush, giving you advantage to attack one enemy.
  - You manage to reach a nearby location that you're aiming for.
  - You're able to remain concealed for a while.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** You're able to remain concealed and continue moving. Pick one from the 9 to 11 list.

### ○Persuasive □□

You built your adventurer character to be unusually persuasive, whether through magical spells or just a build that gives you crazy high skill ranks. Twice per session you can Parley or Carouse with an NPC regardless of the circumstances, and if they aren't hostile to you, you get advantage on the roll as well.

### ○Power Attack □□

When you *have your Adventurer use an especially powerful ability to take down bad guys*, roll+Numbers. You can use this move 2 times per session.

- **On an 8 or Less:** You manage to miss, or the enemies roll unusually well on their saving throws.
- **On a 9 to 11:** Your attack lands, and you cause 2 Harm.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** It's so effective that it makes you wonder why the other party members are there. You cause 3 Harm.

### ○Protection □□□

Your adventurer has special abilities that let them actively protect others. Up to 3 times per session, if an ally who is physically close to you is about to take Harm, you can reduce the amount of Harm they take by 1 (to a minimum of zero).

### ○Steal

When you *have your L2 character try to steal stuff*, roll+Lucky.

- **On an 8 or Less:** You fumble the die roll. Your L2 character's actions are blatantly obvious to anyone watching.
- **On a 9 to 11:** The DM will tell you if there was something of value worth stealing. If so, pick one:
  - Gain 1 Loot.
  - You're able to steal a small object.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** The DM will tell you if there was something of value worth stealing. If so, pick one:
  - Gain 2 Loot.
  - You're able to steal something that it shouldn't even be possible to steal.

### ○Tough

Your adventurer is just plain more tough than most. You have two additional boxes for Harm, which means you don't have Harm Fallout until you accumulate 7 points of Harm.

### ○Utility Power □□□

Up to 3 times per session you can have your character try to use their magic or some other character ability for something useful. When you *have your character try to use a power that's useful or cunning*, roll+Clever.

- **On an 8 or Less:** Pick one:
  - It turns out to be worthless in this situation.
  - You roll really badly on the check you needed to make to have it be effective.
  - The target is able to resist.
- **On a 9 to 11:** Pick one from the 12+ list, but pick one drawback from those below:
  - You draw attention to yourself, and as the one with this special power you're now a high-priority target.
  - You're running low on spells/uses. You have disadvantage for any moves relating to this type of ability until you can rest.
  - It works in a way that limits the party's options in this situation.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** You're able to tilt the situation significantly in your favor. Pick one:
  - Give yourself or a party member advantage on an L2 move.
  - Deprive an enemy of a special ability or other advantage they had.
  - Perform a feat that gets you closer to your goal by subtle means.

### ○Versatile □□□

Your adventurer is unusually versatile; pick 2 additional Tags. Up to 3 times per session, you can use this move to get advantage on an L2 move that leverages one of your Tags.

## Gamer Feature (Pick 1)

### ○Alpha Geek

You can Roll+Clever to Argue, and you can take 1 Stress to get advantage for arguing.

### ○Cheater

When your Gamer character is rolling dice, you can take 1 Stress to cheat. Give yourself advantage on a roll for an L2 move or ignore a point of Harm.

### ○Crazy Build □□□

Your L2 character has an unusual build, such that you can pull off things that you wouldn't normally be able to. Three times per session you can roll+Clever when a move would normally use Numbers or Lucky. (To be clear, you should only take this if you have a high Clever stat.)

### ○DM Favor □□

You've earned the DM's favor in a major way, whether by being their S.O., helping them out with something major, or just having blackmail material. Up to twice per session you can use that favor to pick one of these:

- Get the best possible result an L2 move.
- Have the DM give you a hint about the current in-game situation.
- When you're gaining Loot, gain an extra 3 Loot.
- When your adventurer character would die, instead have them barely survive.

### ○DM Helper □□

Up to twice per session, you can help the DM out. When you do, pick one:

- Give someone arguing with the DM or otherwise causing them trouble disadvantage.
- Give the DM advantage on a move.
- Remove up to 2 Stress from the DM.

### ○Kindness □□

Up to twice per session, when you *do something nice for another player*, they can remove up to 2 points of Stress.

### ○Lucky d20 □□

You have a lucky die that always seems to roll well for you. Up to two times per session, you can use your die's luck to get Advantage on a move you make for your adventurer character doing something. If someone else uses your lucky d20, it doesn't work for them and you lose one use of its ability.

### ○Me Time

When you *leave the game for a bit to calm down*, you can remove up to 2 points of Stress.

### ○Mental Fortitude

You don't succumb to stress too easily. You have 2 additional boxes for Stress, so you don't have Stress Fallout until you accumulate 7 Stress points.

### ○Peacemaker

When you *calm down a dispute*, roll+Clever.

- **On an 8 or Less:** You just make things worse.
- **On a 9 to 11:** Everyone calms down a bit, though things are still kind of tense.
- **On a 12 or Higher:** Everyone feels a bit better. One player of your choice can remove 1 Stress.

### ○Troublemaker

When you *deliberately push someone's buttons*, you can take 1 Stress to cause them stress. Roll a single die; on a 1-4 you cause them 1 Stress, and on a 5-6 you cause them 2 Stress.

# Principles

1. Celebrate the goofiness and humanity of that dungeon fantasy RPG.
2. Be clear about which Layer you're talking about.
3. Paint a strange and vivid world.
4. Give them an accessible hook to kick things off.
5. Let them break stuff.
6. Skip the boring parts.
7. Ask the players questions.
8. Add a dash of human drama.

# ZM Basic Moves

## Assign Advantage/Disadvantage

Whenever a character should have a significantly easier or harder time accomplishing something, give the player advantage or disadvantage on rolling for the relevant move. Pay close attention to the adventurer's tags, and let the player make a case as long as it doesn't take too long.

## Assign Harm/Stress

Whenever it makes sense, assign points of Harm or Stress to one of the characters (which can include your L1 DM character). You can also assign Harm to monsters wherever it seems appropriate. This will usually be 1 point at a time, but you can assign 2 or more if something more extreme is going on.

## Assign Loot

While certain moves can grant PCs points of Loot and possibly a MacGuffin, you can also simply assign these when it seems appropriate.

## Fudge a Roll

When you (as the L1 DM) *fudge a roll to help a PC or NPC*, you can do one of the following:

- Adjust the Harm caused to an L2 PC up or down by 1.
- Adjust the Harm caused to enemies up or down by 1.

## Get Back on Track

When the game gets derailed by side conversations or other distractions and you *try to get things back on track*, roll 2d6:

- **On a 5 or Less:** You find yourself contributing to derailing the game session, or everyone just ignores you.
- **On a 6 to 8:** It takes some considerable effort to get things back on track. Pick one:
  - Take 1 Stress.
  - You make things really awkward.
- It throws you off your concentration. You have disadvantage on your next roll.
- **On a 9 or Higher:** You're able to snap things back on track in short order. You can assign 1 Stress to one Gamer character your choice if you wish.

## Introduce a Distraction

Sometimes real life intrudes on your gaming. As the L0 ZM, use this move to add something happening in the L1 world that distracts from the game. Have an L1 character get a phone call from their work, send them a drama bomb of a text from their S.O., or just have the pizza delivery show up.

## Let Them Rest

When the L2 PCs are able to get some uninterrupted rest, decide which type of rest it is:

- **Short Rest:** This is a fairly short period of rest, say 10 minutes to an hour depending on the edition, enough for the adventurers to catch their breaths. Each PC can remove 1 point of Harm. Players with limited-use Character Moves can erase one check next to such a move.
- **Long Rest:** This is a longer period of rest, such as a full night's sleep in a reasonably good environment. Each PC can remove all accumulated Harm. Players with limited-use Character Moves can erase up to two checks next to such moves.

## Make Shit Up

When things go in a direction you didn't expect and you *make shit up on the fly*, roll 2d6:

- **On a 5 or Less:** You're stumped. Pick one:
  - The game gets derailed for a while.
  - You just throw a fight in, even if it doesn't make sense.
  - You present things in a confusing way. Gamers have advantage to argue with the DM during this scene.
- **On a 6 to 8:** You come up with something decent but a little flawed. Pick one:
  - Roll on the Dumb Names Table (p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**) for any NPCs in the next scene.
  - The balance is a bit off. The players have advantage or disadvantage (pick one) for moves relating to dealing with the opposition in this scene.
  - You use something really obviously pulled from pop culture.
- **On a 9 or Higher:** The L1 DM is able to come up with something pretty good. If you're not sure yourself, ask the L0 players for ideas.

## Make a Soft Move

A "soft move" is when you as the DM add something that changes the fiction. A soft move changes the situation for the L2 PCs in some way. Below is a list of the major soft moves for *The Dungeon Zone*, though of course you can come up with others. Regardless, don't name the soft moves you make; just bring them into the fiction.

- Call for a perception check
- Enforce alignments
- Give them a mission
- Have an NPC explain stuff
- Have authorities assert themselves
- Hint at future threats
- Introduce possible aid
- Present a challenge
- Read a description from the book
- Reveal a betrayal
- Spring a trap
- Take stuff away
- Throw in some monsters

## Name an NPC

When you *name to an NPC on the fly*, roll 2d6:

- **On a 5 or Less:** You can't seem to come up with anything good. Roll on the Dumb NPC Names table (p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**), or use the first name the players suggest.
- **On a 6 to 8:** You come up with something decent. Roll on the Okay NPC Names table (p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**), or grab a name from social media.
- **On a 9 or Higher:** You quickly figure out a good name. Pick something yourself, or roll on the Good NPC Names table (p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**).

## Negate an Action (As Established)

You shouldn't be using this move too often, but when appropriate you can simply say that something an adventurer tries doesn't work. This is typically when something in the fiction makes it very clearly that way. If the wizard throws a fireball at a fire elemental for some reason, you can look at the Fire tag and say that it has no effect on the monster regardless of how well they rolled.

# The Dungeon Zone DM Sheet

## DM Name

## DM Look

- Hoodie, polo shirt and slacks, T-shirt and jeans, office attire, T-shirt and sweat pants
- Background music, dice tower, fancy DM screen, laptop with game info, large collection of miniatures
- 5-Hour Energy, anime merch, caffeinated soda, light beer, plush dragon, weed

## Game Title

## Edition

## Campaign Setting

## DMing Quirks

## Play Space

## DM Goal

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Stress

□□□□□

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## DM Character Moves (Pick 2)

As with Gamer characters, pick two Character Moves for your DM character from the list below.

### Creative

You're an especially creative DM. You have advantage when rolling to *name an NPC* and *make shit up*.

### Critical Tables

You use custom critical hit and critical miss tables that are especially gruesome and at times hilarious.

- Any time a player rolls a 2 or a 3 on the dice (before adding their stat, but after resolving advantage or disadvantage) for a move to have their L2 character do something, describe a terrible accident or gory critical hit, and their L2 characters take an extra point of Harm.
- Any time a player rolls an 11 or 12 on the dice (before adding their stat, but after resolving advantage or disadvantage) for attacking an enemy, describe the gory blow they land, and they cause an extra point of Harm.

### House Rules

You use a lot of house rules and generally shape the game to your own whims. Other players have disadvantage to *argue* with you.

### Kindness □□

Up to twice per session, when you *do something nice for another player*, they can remove up to 2 points of Stress.

### Long-Suffering

You don't give into stress too easily. You have two additional Stress boxes.

### Pet □□

You have a beloved pet who hangs around where you play the game. Up to twice per session you can play with or pet them to remove 1 Stress. Also, they occasionally play with dice or knock miniatures over. Pick a species and name for your pet:

- Bird, cat, dog, ferret, frog, lizard, rabbit, rat, snake
- Bailey, Bonnie, Buddy, Coco, Lola, Max, Peanut Butter, Princess, Shadow

### Random Death

At any time, you can take 2 Stress to declare that an L2 player character has died.

### Worrisome Smile □□

Up to 2 times per session you can simply declare that a player's L2 action fails (as per the worst result on the move), without giving them a chance to roll or *argue*.

## Notes

# Last Time on *The Dungeon Zone*

1. It's been long enough that I'm having trouble remembering what happened. Okay, so if I'm remembering right, we left off when the party was in the \_\_\_\_\_ (type of place) of \_\_\_\_\_ (place name) looking for \_\_\_\_\_ (an important artifact), right? And you just barely survived fighting that \_\_\_\_\_ (monster). So now you're in the \_\_\_\_\_ (type of place), trying to figure out how to get into the \_\_\_\_\_ (building) without being detected.
2. Last time we played, the party went into the \_\_\_\_\_ (type of place) of \_\_\_\_\_ (place name). They were trying to stop \_\_\_\_\_ (villain) from \_\_\_\_\_ (evil deed). Along the way, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of a PC) managed to anger \_\_\_\_\_ (name of an NPC). \_\_\_\_\_ (name of another PC) tried to calm things down, but only made it worse. Now the party is hiding from \_\_\_\_\_ (name of an NPC) and trying to figure out their next move.
3. Last time, the party took a job to recover \_\_\_\_\_ (an important item) from \_\_\_\_\_ (a dangerous place). Along the way, the party was ambushed by \_\_\_\_\_ (a monster or enemy). Thanks to \_\_\_\_\_ (a PC) making good use of \_\_\_\_\_ (a spell or other ability), you won, and now you're looking down at your destination, trying to decide how to get past the \_\_\_\_\_ (an enemy or obstacle).
4. Seriously, it's been like two months. Okay, so, like, you guys had infiltrated the \_\_\_\_\_ (secure location) and fought off some \_\_\_\_\_ (enemies), and now you're confronting \_\_\_\_\_ (major villain), but he/she has the \_\_\_\_\_ (object) of \_\_\_\_\_ (something ominous), and is going to use it. Oh, and \_\_\_\_\_ (a PC) has the \_\_\_\_\_ (object) of \_\_\_\_\_ (something hopeful), which may be able to counter it.
5. We didn't get very far last time, so you were still at the \_\_\_\_\_ (building) in \_\_\_\_\_ (city name). You managed to piss off the \_\_\_\_\_ (authority figure), but they still want you to travel to the \_\_\_\_\_ (geographic feature) of \_\_\_\_\_ (scary thing) to take care of the infestation of \_\_\_\_\_ (type of monsters). We left off with you guys having finished buying supplies, right?
6. When we left off, you'd recovered the \_\_\_\_\_ (type of item) of \_\_\_\_\_ (something ominous) from the \_\_\_\_\_ (underground location) of \_\_\_\_\_ (negative emotion). \_\_\_\_\_ (one of the PCs) is currently carrying in their \_\_\_\_\_ (container), though as you arrive at the \_\_\_\_\_ (location where people in authority are), you notice that they've been acting a bit odd...

## Layer Zero Real Life Playing TDZ



Player



Zone Master



2d6



Irony



Moves

## Layer One Pretend Gamers Playing a Fantasy RPG



Gamer



Dungeon Master



d20



Caffeine



Shouting

## Layer Two Fantasy World Adventuring!



Adventurer



World/NPCs



Magic!



Swords



Gods or  
Whatever