

# WEST SIDE DRAGON JOUSTERS



## CASTLES & CRUSADES House Rules

by Darryl Koster

These are the rules that we will be using during our Castles & Crusades games. They clarify things that you may not find in your Player's Handbook. The majority of them are from the Castle Keeper's Guide. If you'd like to read more about them, you can borrow the Castle Keeper's Guide during one of our games.

- Rolling Attributes: Roll 4d6 six times and drop the lowest die from each roll. Then assign them to your attributes in the order that you'd like. Points may be swapped 2 for 1. (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 10)
- Attribute Checks: We use the "18/+6 Rule" for the SIEGE engine. This means that the challenge base is always 18. If the attribute check is against your primary attribute, you should add a +6 to your roll in addition to your level and attribute bonus. (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 276)
- Saving Throws: "A saving throw is simply an attribute check for a character to avoid damage or other unwanted alteration or harm caused by a creature's abilities and/or specific situations or effects." They can be found on your character sheet or in the Player's Handbook. (Player's Handbook p. 167-169)
- Starting Hit Points: All first level characters start out with the maximum amount of hit points, including their constitution bonus. *This prevents players from creating a 1<sup>st</sup> level character with only one hit point.*
- Recovering Hit Points: Players recover hit points at the rate of 1d4+1 hit points per day instead of 1 per day. The rate of recovery can increase over time, and with the addition of magical healing, herbs, and other factors as described in the Player's Handbook. (Player's Handbook p. 178)
- Fate Points: Fate points can be used affect the game in small but significant ways by allowing you to modify your dice rolls and your character's fate (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 337). Rather than gaining fate points at each level, in our game players have one fate point that they can use at each game (usually a token or coin.) They can spend that point to do any one of these things:
  - Fortune's Favor - Alter a single d20 roll used to make an attack, attribute check, level check, or a saving throw. Add 1d8 to the die roll.
  - Fortune's Fool - Reroll a die.
  - Mighty Blow - Make an earth-shattering critical hit. Then roll an unmodified d20 (unless magical) for the weapon. 1-5 on the roll and the weapon is destroyed.
  - You Missed Me! - Avoid an attack.
  - I Just Made It! - Automatically succeed at a saving throw.
  - Sound the Charge! - Double the character's movement for the round.
  - Down But Not Out - Avoid death when reduced to below -10 Hit Points.
  - Providence Smiles - Gain a plot break

- Secondary Skills (optional): If you would like to use them, choose one from the secondary skill list. You may also randomly roll 2d12 for a skill from this list. The skill will initially give you a +1 to checks associated with that skill. You do not add your level bonus. *The skill must relate to your character's background.* (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 320)
- Advantages (optional): You can choose one advantage at 1<sup>st</sup> level. After that use the "Advantage Progression" table. "Types of Advantages" are in the back of the Castle Keeper's Guide, and the Book of Familiars. They can add more variety and diversity to your character. Please make sure that you meet the requirements and that your BtH (bonus to hit) is high enough to select the advantage. (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 323)
- Perception: Perception isn't a skill or ability. Instead we use attribute checks when you are trying to perceive, detect, or search.
  - Intelligence – is used when you are actively searching.
  - Wisdom – is like a sixth sense or gut feeling and is often automatic/passive.
  - Charisma – is used for social cues.
- Magic: An expanded section on magic can be found in the Castle Keeper's Guide, and covers spellbooks, material components, scrolls, and types of magic such as illusion. (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 39)
- Combat Actions: For information on the time it takes to do combat actions each round like attacks, spells, moving, and using items and abilities. See "Combat Actions" in your Player's Handbook. (Player's Handbook p. 171)
- Movement: The book specifies that you can only move at half your rate when attacking. *In our game you can move at your full movement rate.* If you move faster than your full rate you must make a charging attack. (Player's Handbook p. 172-173)
- Charging: In a normal ten second round, you can move at a jog or run. A jog is twice your movement rate, and a run is four times your movement rate. If you are charging you must move at least your full movement rate or more in a straight line. You get a +2 to your damage for the charge attack, and are at -4 to your AC for the rest of the round. (Player's Handbook p. 173)
- Combat Maneuvers: There are many ways that you can gain the upper hand by using combat maneuvers. You can gain bonuses to attack and to your armor class. (Player's Handbook p. 176)
  - Called Shot: -8 to hit, automatic critical.
  - Charge: +2 to attacker's damage, -4 to the attacker's AC.
  - \*Disarm: Attacker must hit AC 18 + defender's HD or level.

- Disengage (Hasty): Full move, -2 to AC, opponent allowed free attack.
  - Disengage (Fighting): Half move, no other action.
  - Dodge: +2 to defender's AC.
  - Evade: +4 defender's AC against one opponent.
  - Flank: +1 to attacker's to hit roll.
  - Offensive Focus: +3 to hit, -6 AC, announce before initiative.
  - Parry: No initiative roll, +4 AC, no attack.
  - Push: Drives an enemy back 1-10 feet.
  - Receiving Charge: Double damage.
  - Rear: +2 to attacker's to hit.
  - Shield Blow: -6 to hit, no extra attack, constitution save or stun 1d2 rounds.
  - Shield Wall: 4 or more form interlocking shield wall, +4 AC, +2 strength checks.
- \*Only fighter, ranger, knight, rogue, cleric, and paladin can disarm.

- Critical Hits: On a roll of natural 20, double the attack dice and double any bonus damage. "Thus a natural 20 with a +1 longsword and +2 strength bonus would deal 2d8+6 points of damage to the opponent!" This is known as Option 4 "Roadhouse Rules." (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 303)
- Critical Fumbles: On a roll of a natural 1 your character may drop or break their weapon, trip, or damage themselves or another character. Typically I do not use a random chart, it is based on the situation. If you fall or trip you can make a dexterity roll to avoid losing a combat round getting back up. Weapons and items may become damaged or break on a critical fumble. (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 304)
- Combat Wastage: If you roll a critical fumble for your weapon you must roll for combat wastage for your weapon. Roll a 20 sided dice. On a roll of a 1 or 2 the weapon has suffered damage requiring a blacksmith's attention and it's damage drops by -2.

Likewise, *if a character or foe rolls a natural 20 against an opponent*, roll a saving throw for the opponent's armor or shield. On a roll of 1 or 2, the equipment has suffered damage requiring a blacksmith's attention and it's AC drops two points.

These rules only extend to any armor, weapons, or pieces of equipment struck by a natural 20 or involved in a natural 1. (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 182)

*In extreme cases beyond critical hits, such as when struck by magical fire, lightning, hurled boulders, acid attacks, and other types of extraordinary damage.* We use table 9.3 for "Weathering & Combat Wastage." (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 184) You roll two 20 sided dice. One for your equipment and one for your gear. If one of them fails, then all of

your equipment or all of your gear needs to be replaced. This only happens in rare cases!

- Death: Once a character reaches 0 hit points it passes out. They are not dead, but incapable of acting due to blood loss and physical or mental damage. The character is unable to act and is unconscious or gravely wounded. Those with 0 hit points recover consciousness in 1d6 hours. Once they regain consciousness they can do little other than crawl from the battlefield or call for help. Movement is 1/2 their normal rate, but they still can't participate in combat, cast spells, turn undead or any strenuous or demanding action. The full effects of magical healing on characters reduced to 0 hit points is immediate.

At -1 to -6 hit points they are unconscious and require 24 hours bed rest or magical healing to return to 0 hit points and regain consciousness, after which they begin to heal normally.

At -7 to -9 hit points, the character is mortally wounded and loses 1 hit point per round. Aid administered to the wounds immediately stops the hit point loss and after 24 hours bed rest or magical healing they return to 0 hit points, regain consciousness, and normal healing occurs.

At -10 hit points or more, death occurs immediately. Only *resurrection*, *reincarnation*, or a *fate point* (Down But Not Out) can possibly remedy the situation. (Player's Handbook p. 178)

- Two Weapon Fighting: For information on two-weapon fighting see your Player's Handbook. When using two weapons you get two attacks per round, but there is a -3 penalty to hit for your primary hand, and a -6 penalty to hit for your off hand. Your dexterity bonus offsets these penalties. (Player's Handbook p. 177)

There are two easy ways to create a character who fights with two weapons. One is to create a monk character, who gets this as an ability at level 6. The other is to choose the Two Weapon Expert advantage. In our game you can choose this twice. Once at level one (BtH +0) and a second time when your BtH (bonus to hit) is +3. (Castle Keeper's Guide p. 328) The second time you choose the Two Weapon Expert advantage, you no longer have any penalties to hit.

- Multi-Classing: For information on multi-classing please see the section on multi-classing in your Player's Handbook. Please note that it says "Rule One: The Castle Keeper is the ultimate arbiter of which classes can be combined and how they are combined." (Player's Handbook p. 187)
- Turning Undead: The player must roll to turn by making a successful wisdom attribute check. "The challenge level for the check is equal to the undead creature's hit dice. A successful turn undead check results in the undead monster being turned or destroyed." (Player's Handbook p. 180)

➤ Rolling to Turn:  $d20 + \text{Attribute Modifier} + \text{Level} > \text{Monster HD}$

- Range: The maximum range for turning undead is 60 feet.
- Failure: If the attempt fails, you may not attempt to turn that specific group of undead again for a full day.
- Amount Turned: d12 common undead, 1d6 extraordinary undead, or 1 unique undead. The amount of undead turned is affected positively or negatively by your charisma modifier.
- Common: Non-sentient undead such as skeletons and zombies. (1d12)
- Extraordinary: Semi-sentient undead of great power with special abilities. (1d6)
- Unique: Rare and powerful creatures such as vampires and liches. (1)
- Turning Effect: Turned undead flee at their full movement rate for 10 rounds. If unable to flee they will cower.
- Cowering: A +2 bonus is awarded on all attacks versus cowering undead. If the cleric or paladin comes within ten feet of the cowering undead or attacks them, the turning is broken. If another party member attacks a cowering undead it will cease cowering and attack.
- Destroying Undead: If you are five levels higher than the hit dice of the undead being turned, they are destroyed instead of turned. If you are ten levels higher you destroy the maximum amount of undead being turned.

If something happens during the course of the game that you feel is not in the rules, or is somehow unfair. Please try to come up with a creative solution or use your fate point to change the outcome.

Thanks for playing!

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