

Raven's Brew

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nix

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1 Introduction

This is DnD homebrew for the 2024 rules, but it is also largely compatible with the 2014 rules.

2 Values

2.1 Interactivity

We here at we-know-what's-best-for-you GmbH know what's best for you, and that is fun, and we firmly believe that fun can only be achieved in a game where all participating parties are involved in whatever is happening. These rules try to do this ambition justice by putting a focus on **contested** rolls, because two people in the same action are more than one. Additionally, there are more options to react to events in combat even when you are neither victim nor perpetrator, leading to more participation and thus more room for fun.

2.2 Flavour

Another main drive expressed through these rules is one for flavour, the irresistible urge to bring something into existence that feels great. Ways to perform cool moves and through doing so bringing a character to life that feels real, coherent, and evokes awe.

This interweaving of character fantasy and in-game behaviour will be a recurring theme throughout these rules. An assassin ought to assassinate, and thus the rules have to be there to not just enable, but support and incentivize the assassin specifically to assassinate.

2.3 Strategy

I like positional combat on battlemaps, and these rules bring new incentive to strategic positioning through the introduction of Focus, Vision and a new interactive action economy that offers a real trade-off between ag-

gression and defence through the new defensive reactions, as well as between doing something now and doing something better later through surge dice.

2.4 Flow

When combat takes ages and some people got nothing to do, shit's whack.

2.5 Variety

If there are too few viable options to choose from, shit's whack.

2.6 Balance

I don't know whether much of this is balanced. Nothing of this sticks out to me as broken or useless, do tell me where I'm wrong though.

Part I

Reworks

3 AC-less defence

AC-less: Creatures do not have an Armor Class anymore.

Missing attacks: An attack automatically misses its target if the attack roll isn't at least as high as the Missing Threshold.

Missing Threshold: The base Missing Threshold of a target depends on its size, as shown in the table below. To determine the size of something that has no given size, you can use the Hit Area and height or length measures as guidelines.

Size	Missing Threshold	Hit Area	Height or Length
Minuscule	20	$<25\text{cm}^2$	$<8\text{cm}$
Fine	18	$<100\text{cm}^2$	$<15\text{cm}$
Diminutive	16	$<400\text{cm}^2$	$<30\text{cm}$
Tiny	14	$<0.15\text{m}^2$	$<60\text{cm}$
Small	12	$<0.6\text{m}^2$	$<120\text{cm}$
Medium	10	$<2.5\text{m}^2$	$<240\text{cm}$
Large	8	$<10\text{m}^2$	$<5\text{m}$
Huge	6	$<40\text{m}^2$	$<10\text{m}$
Gargantuan	4	$>40\text{m}^2$	$>10\text{m}$

The Hit Area refers to the area of a target that is facing the attacker. For example, a piece of paper is easier to hit from the front than from the side, because the paper's thinness leads to a smaller Hit Area when looking at it sideways.

For the purposes of very small targets, a new set of sizes has been introduced. These will, for example, be used for [Aimed Strikes](#).

Even smaller sizes: If a target is significantly smaller than the sizes listed above, you can either find an extended table in the [tables chapter](#), or extrapolate the Missing Threshold from the measures in the table. Start with the measures and Missing Threshold for minuscule targets. Then add 2 to the Missing Threshold, quarter the Hit Area and halve the height or length. Repeat this until the measures fit the target you have in mind to get the appropriate Missing Threshold.

Damage Reduction: Instead of Armor Class, creatures have a Damage Reduction value. This value is subtracted from any damage the wearer takes through an attack that is not a critical hit.

Every bonus to Armor Class that is not the Dexterity bonus can be converted 1:1 into a bonus for Damage Reduction, unless otherwise noted. An armour that sets the Armor Class of the wearer to 13 + Dexterity modifier will, for example, be converted to 3 Damage Reduction, because it is an Armor Class bonus of +3 compared to the base Armor Class of 10, while the Dexterity modifier is discarded. The conversion for armours can also be seen in the [tables chapter](#).

Damage Reduction from multiple sources stacks. However, the prerequisites for each source must still be met. For example, the Damage Reduction now gained from the Barbarians Unarmoured Defence and a heavy armour will not stack, because the heavy armour still disables the Barbarians Unarmoured Defence.

Reactive Defence: There are now options to reactively defend against incoming attacks and other effects. These include [Dodging](#), [Blocking](#), [Parrying](#) and some parts of [Spell Manipulation](#). The base mechanics of these are explained in the [Reactions](#) section.

Misses? Any rule or feature that requires a missed attack to work also works if the attack does not deal damage because of damage reduction, blocking, or parrying. Those attacks count as both a hit and a miss in that regard. Note that Dodging explicitly causes dodged attacks to miss.

Cover: Instead of increasing the Armor Class of the creature that is behind cover, the Missing Threshold for attacks that target that creature increases by 2 for half cover and by 5 for three-quarters cover.

4 Reactions

Free Reactions: In addition to a Reaction, every creature also has a Free Reaction they can use.

The free object interaction each character has once per turn may be used as a Free Reaction instead, if there is a trigger that plausibly allows for such a reaction, at the DMs mercy. For example, you can use your Free Reaction to shut a door as soon as someone has walked through it on their turn.

When you have the Incapacitated condition, you can no longer use your Free Reaction.

Reserving Actions: At the end of your turn, you gain 1 additional Reaction per remaining Action. If you were unable to use these Actions because you were Incapacitated, this conversion does not happen.

Ready Action: When using the Ready Action, you also gain 1 additional Reaction.

Reserving Bonus Actions: At the end of your turn, you gain 1 additional Reaction per remaining Bonus Action. If you were unable to use these Bonus Actions because you were Incapacitated, this conversion does not happen.

Reserving Reactions: At the start your turn, you gain 1 **Surge Die** per remaining Reaction. If you were unable to use these Reactions because you were Incapacitated, this conversion does not happen.

Reaction Timing: Unless otherwise noted, a Reaction can only be taken after a suitable trigger was announced, and only before its effects are applied.

4.1 New Reactions

Prey on the Vulnerable: If a creature that you can see and that is within your range receives the Incapacitated condition, you can take a Reaction to make a melee weapon attack against that creature.

Trip: If a creature that you can see moves within your reach or attempts to move out of your reach, you can take a Reaction to make a shove attack against that creature to make it fall prone.

Reactive Defence: There are now options to reactively defend against incoming attacks and other effects. These include **Dodging**, **Blocking**, **Parrying** and some parts of **Spell Manipulation**, as detailed within their respective sections.

5 Vision & Focus

Vision: Many features in these rules rely on seeing something happen, and humanoids typically only see what happens in front of them, being just barely unable to discern what happens 90 degrees to their left and right.

In combat, track and attend to the direction you look. Using miniatures on battlemaps works well for this, but any small thing that discernibly points any direction will do.

Backstab Advantage: Whenever you decide to attack a creature that can't see you, you gain advantage on that attack. Against humanoid creatures, for example, that is usually the case when being behind their back.

Focus: You usually have something within your perception that you primarily attend to - this is what you focus on. You automatically switch focus to a creature or object when targeting them with a spell, attack, or other effect. You can only focus on one target at a time.

As long as you are focused on a target, you can rotate with the target's movement, if needed, to keep that target within your sight. This way, for

example, a humanoid can save their back from another creature's attacks, leading to the attacker not receiving Backstab Advantage.

Switch Focus: At the end of your turn, you can switch Focus to a creature that you can perceive. Otherwise, you can use a Free Reaction to Focus another creature that you notice moving towards you or being near you.

Losing Focus: You lose Focus if you receive the Incapacitated condition or when you lose the ability to perceive the target of your Focus.

A creature that you Focus may also make you lose Focus by applying the charmed or frightened condition to you, by successfully hiding behind full cover, or by spontaneously becoming unseen by you (for example through invisibility or teleportation).

Escape Focus: To escape a creature's Focus, you can take a Bonus Action, making a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check contested by the creature's passive perception. This only works against creatures that are larger than you.

This can, for example, be used to be able to attack the back of a humanoid creature that previously focused their vision on you. This way, you can gain Backstab Advantage for your attacks against that humanoid.

Draw Focus: You can force other creatures to Switch Focus by drawing their attention to yourself, another creature or something else. This may occur as a side-effect of anything you do that is sufficiently noticeable, at the mercy of the player controlling the respective creature whose Focus is to be drawn.

If a creature does take notice and the controlling player decides it would be plausible that their creature's Focus could be drawn, the creature may make a Concentration check to resist having to Switch Focus. The Difficulty Class of this check is determined by the controlling player and the drawing player in a way that should be plausible for whatever was done to attempt drawing attention.

5.1 Example Scenarios

A Halfling cutthroat is looking to take out a Human guard they lead into an alley. They are currently looking at another, and the guard charges forward to strike. To escape the guards focus, the nimble cutthroat swiftly maneuvers around the guard, using their bonus action to make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check against 13, the guards passive perception. They succeed and stand behind the disoriented guards back, able to attack the guard with advantage.

A Bard attempts to draw the attention of a bloodthirsty Gnoll that prioritizes the weak. They attempt to do so by faking a scream of pain and acting hurt & vulnerable. The DM controlling the Gnoll may decide that the attempt is automatically successful and make the Gnoll Switch Focus to the Bard - they might also decide that the Gnoll might try to resist (for a reason) and roll a Concentration check contested by a Charisma (Performance) check by the Bard, only switching the Gnolls Focus if they lose the contest - they might also decide that the attempt automatically fails (for a reason).

6 Aspects of Stealth

When using stealth, there are multiple aspects that can lead to being detected. Most commonly, being seen or heard is key to being detected, but scent may also play a role at some points, especially when a creature that may detect you has a keen sense of smell, like a wolf.

Passive Stealth (Scent): You have a base passive Stealth (Scent) score of 15. You can mask your scent to gain a bonus of +5 to this score, but you can also receive -5 to this score when giving off a strong scent that is uncommon for the place you are traversing.

The bonus might be given after applying herbs or some magic to yourself or by being washed. The malus might be given after taking a tour through the sewers, after a tough battle that left you wounded or after strenuous

activity that left you sweaty.

When you try hiding from a creature that is close to you, both your Dexterity (Stealth) check and your passive Stealth (Scent) must be below the creature's passive perception. If the Dexterity (Stealth) check fails, you are heard or seen, as usual. If the passive Stealth (Scent) fails, the creature smells you. This may only be a hint towards your presence (DM's choice) and may not lead to you being seen immediately, but it is reason for the creature to make a Wisdom (Perception) check to try and locate you. For some creatures it may be reasonable to have them be able to locate you based on scent alone, at the DM's discretion.

6.1 Example Scenario

A thief tries to sneak past a guard dog. They rolled a 21 on their Dexterity (Stealth) check and have a passive Stealth (Scent) score of 15, because they took no measures to mask their scent (no bonus) and do not smell strongly (no malus).

The guard dog has a passive perception of 12, so the thief gets close to passing him with ease, without a sound, but the guard dog has a keen sense of smell, bumping up his passive Perception for scent to 17. The guard dog smells something unusual as soon as the thief gets too close, and, trying to investigate that unusual scent, the guard dog rolls a Wisdom (Perception) check, resulting in a 19. The guard dog did not see or hear the thief through that, so the thief is still unnoticed and can pass without further worries.

Part II

New Stuff

7 Aimed Strikes

During play, it became apparent that attack rolls lost a good deal of their charm. This was mainly because an uncontested attack roll was too likely to succeed, given that the Missing Threshold is significantly lower than Armor Class is in the base game. This also made having a good attack bonus or rolling with advantage or disadvantage less significant on attacks, especially against larger targets that have an even smaller Missing Threshold. In short, making an attack roll felt redundant as soon as it was uncontested.

Aimed Strikes are the response to this problem. They allow the attacker to trade their hit chance against other benefits, damage among them, increasing the risk of the attack roll. This also deepens strategic thinking, as some circumstances may still incentivize going for the easy hit. This active choice should make the reliability feel better than before, where the reliability was imposed.

Aimed Strike: When attacking a target, you can choose to target a specific part of them instead of them in general. This changes the base Missing Threshold of the attack to the base Missing Threshold of the targeted part, depending on its size as noted in the chapter on [AC-less defence](#). Parts can benefit from cover and usually have the same Damage Reduction as the creature or object they belong to. When an Aimed Strike hits a creature, they must make a Wound Save as described below.

The DM may decide to also tie other effects to specific parts, such as a Damage Reduction modifier, particular damage vulnerabilities, other conditions to save against and the like.

Wound Save: When you are struck by an Aimed Strike you must make a

Constitution saving throw against half the attacks damage or 10, whichever is higher. If you succeed, nothing happens. Otherwise, the attack leaves the targeted body part wounded.

If the damage equals at least half your maximum hit points, the targeted body part is wounded on a successful save and disabled on a failed save.

Wounded: A wounded body part is more difficult to use. D20-Tests that rely on that body part are rolled with disadvantage. If a body part is wounded and receives another wound, it becomes disabled instead.

A wound can be treated through healing of any kind. One instance of healing removes one wound, while being restored to full hit points removes all wounds. A wound can also be treated through a DC10 Wisdom (Medicine) check, or through one use of a Healers Kit.

Disabled: A disabled body part is rendered unusable. D20-Tests that rely on that body part automatically fail. Depending on the body part, other conditions or consequences may be associated with that body part being disabled, at the DMs discretion.

A disability can only be treated through highly potent healing magic such as the Regenerate spell or through complicated medicinal procedures only specialists can provide.

Weakspots: Some creatures may have regions on their body that are especially vulnerable to attacks. Targeting these regions should be more difficult, but also yield more devastating results for the target.

As a DM, you can make use of this when designing an encounter to make a fight more interesting. Maybe the Kobold tinkerer has a bomb in their pocket that just waits to be hit by fire damage to explode in their face, or maybe the dragon loses their breath weapon with a well placed strike through their lungs.

Some weakspots may not be apparent at first glance. In this case, a Study action may give the players just the information they need.

Reliable Hits (optional): When an Aimed Strike misses the increased Missing Threshold of a body part, but the attack roll was still at least as high as the base Missing Threshold of the target, it still hits the target, but without any of the benefits of hitting a particular body part.

7.1 Example Scenario

The champion knows that a blinded cyclops is a harmless cyclops. Therefore, she decides to aim her shot at his eye. This increases the Missing Threshold for the attack from 6 to 18, given that the eye is a Fine target. The DM decides on the fly that the eye is vulnerable to piercing damage. She rolls her attack as usual and hits, dealing 38 piercing damage, so the cyclops must make a DC19 Wound Save. He fails this save, so his eye is now wounded, giving him disadvantage on everything that relies on his sight. This is not enough for the champion though, so she fires a second arrow towards his eye, dealing 46 piercing damage. The cyclops fails his DC23 Wound Save and his eye is now disabled, leaving him with the blinded condition.

8 Contests

The 2024 rules saw the removal of contested rolls and moved towards the use of saving throws instead. That is the exact opposite direction that these rules want to go. To establish more interactivity, contests are thus reintroduced here. The actions that use those are described in the chapter on [Adjustments](#).

Sometimes one characters or monsters efforts are directly opposed to others. This can occur when both of them are trying to do the same thing and only one can succeed, such as attempting to snatch up a magic ring that has fallen on the floor. This situation also applies when one of them is trying to prevent the other one from accomplishing a goal, for example, when a monster tries to force open a door that an adventurer is holding closed. In situations like these, the outcome is determined by a special form of ability check, called a contest.

Contest: Both participants in a contest make ability checks appropriate to their efforts. They apply all appropriate bonuses and penalties, but instead of comparing the total to a DC, they compare the totals of their two checks. The participant with the higher check total wins the contest. That character or monster either succeeds at the action or prevents the other one from succeeding.

If the contest results in a tie, the situation remains the same as it was before the contest. Thus, one contestant might win the contest by default. If two characters tie in a contest to snatch a ring off the floor, neither character grabs it. In a contest between a monster trying to open a door and an adventurer trying to keep the door closed, a tie means that the door remains shut.

9 Surge Dice

A Surge Die is 1d6 that can be used for various effects that are described below. You can use one or more Surge Dice as part of an Action, Bonus Action, Free Action, Reaction, or Free Reaction. You can use more than one surge die at once for the same effect. All unspent Surge Dice expire at the start of your next turn and at the end of combat.

When a Surge Die is used as a part of a contest, both parties may expend further Surge Dice at will to aid them in the contest after the other added one to their roll.

Obtaining Surge Dice: You can obtain Surge Dice through reserving Reactions as described in the [Reaction](#) rules. Some classes may also give features that relate to Surge Dice.

Power: Add the roll to an attack roll, ability check, or the damage you deal to one creature. If the Surge Die is added to the damage of a critical hit, it is not doubled.

Force: Subtract the roll from one saving throw you require one creature to make. This can be part of an effect that requires multiple creatures to roll

a saving throw, but it only applies to the one creature you choose.

Swiftness: You gain 10ft. of movement speed that you can immediately use.

Speed: Add the roll to your Initiative, potentially changing your position in the Initiative Order. If you are first in the Initiative Order, move to the last spot beforehand, with the same Initiative as the previously last entry.

You can only skip past a maximum of one entry per Surge Die spent. When the maximum is reached, your Initiative cannot exceed the Initiative of the entry that is now ahead of you in the Initiative Order.

If you are doing this during your turn, this does not lend creatures that acted before you another turn after you in case you skip past them, and it similarly does not trigger effects tied to Initiative again. If you are doing this outside of your turn and skip past the creature whose turn it currently is, you take your turn directly after them.

Tenacity: You gain temporary hit points equal to the roll until the start of your next turn.

10 Blocking

Blocking: Blocking is a new skill that uses Strength or Dexterity, shield wielders choice, modified by the shields Blocking Modifier.

Your proficiency with shields applies to Blocking checks, and there is no way to become proficient in Blocking itself.

Additionally, it is now possible to apply expertise to shields, and when applied, this expertise also applies to Blocking checks.

Blocking Modifier: A usual shield has a Blocking Modifier of +5. To use a shields Blocking Modifier, you have to be proficient with shields.

Prerequisites: To use the features below, you need to wield a shield.

Block: You can use a Reaction to try to block an attack that you can see and that targets you.

Make a Blocking check. If the result is at least as high as the attack roll, you successfully block the attack. It deals no damage.

When trying to block a critical hit, you roll with disadvantage.

Defensive Stance: You can use your Action to focus on blocking attacks. You can use the Block Reaction (see above) a number of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus without using a Reaction until the start of your next turn.

II Dodging

Dodging isnt really a thing, lets change that.

To be more elaborate, in the base game, in many cases, Armor Class includes the Dexterity Bonus of a creature. This reasonably reflects some sort of ability to dodge - what else would the Dexterity Bonus be good for when it comes to avoiding damage? This is completely lost on many tables, as AC is often perceived to be nothing more than a coherent mass of “all of this misses” or “all of this doesnt affect me”. To add to that, defending against attacks is easily perceived as something passive due to the nature of AC, while dodging should imply activity on the defendants side.

Implementing some sort of mechanic that allows for reactive dodging would be quite nice for multiple reasons. It (a) makes defending against attacks part of the action economy, giving more weight to proper defensive strategies, it (b) presents the swiftness of some characters in combat, giving more flavour to their character and differentiating it mechanically from other characters, and it (c) gives the player the ability to actively avoid especially dangerous attacks while permitting weaker ones. This, in turn, allows for more aggressive encounter design.

Also, adding an option to dodge & roll would be nice, especially because

swiftly jumping away from the point of impact of an attack is something that feels like it should be possible.

Dodging check: A Dodging check is a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check that is modified by the armour you're wearing as follows:

- While wearing light armour or no armour, the modifier is +5.
- While wearing medium armour, the modifier is +2 (+3 instead with Medium Armour Master).
- While wearing heavy armour, the modifier is +0.

Dodge: You can use your Reaction to try to dodge an attack that you can see and that targets you.

Make a Dodge check. If the result is at least as high as the attack roll, you successfully dodge the attack. It misses.

When trying to dodge a critical hit, you roll with disadvantage.

Dodge & Roll: You can use your Reaction to try to dodge an attack that you can see and that targets you or an area effect that encompasses you. Make a Dodge check and move to an unoccupied spot within 10 feet of you.

If you're trying to dodge an attack and the result is at least as high as the attack roll, you dodge successfully and the attack misses.

If you're trying to dodge an area effect and the result is at least as high as the DC of the effect and your movement makes you leave the area of the area effect, you succeed and are not affected. If you remain inside the area effect and it required a Dexterity saving throw, you automatically succeed on the saving throw. If it required another saving throw, make the other saving throw as usual.

If the Dodge check succeeds, your movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

If the Dodge check fails, you fall prone at your target location.

If all spots within 10 feet are occupied, you fall prone in place, even if the Dodge check succeeded.

When trying to dodge & roll in response to a critical hit, you roll with disadvantage.

Evasive Stance: You can use your Action to focus on dodging attacks. You can use the Dodge Reaction (see above) and Dodge & Roll Reaction (see above) a number of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus without using a Reaction until the start of your next turn.

12 Parrying

Parrying: Parrying is a new skill that uses the ability that you use your weapon with.

If you are proficient with the weapon you wield, you are automatically also proficient in Parrying with that weapon.

You can't be proficient in Parrying in the usual sense.

Expertise can be applied to Parrying regardless. Then, the Proficiency Bonus will be doubled for Parrying checks you make with weapons you are proficient with.

Prerequisites: To use the features below, you need to wield a melee weapon.

Parry: You can use your Reaction to parry a melee attack that you can see and that targets you. Make a Parrying check. If the result is at least as high as the attack roll, you successfully parry, reducing the attacks damage by your weapons' Parrying Power.

If you are wielding more than one melee weapon, you can parry using multiple of those weapons at once. If the parry is successful, reduce the attacks damage by the sum of the Parrying Powers of all used weapons instead.

If you reduce the attacks damage to 0, your weapons lock, giving the attacker disadvantage on their attack rolls until either of you make an attack

with their locked weapon or either of you moves out of the others range.

When trying to parry a critical hit, you roll with disadvantage.

When rolling a natural 20 on your Parrying Check, the Parrying Power is doubled.

Parrying Power: A weapons Parrying Power is equal to the maximum damage it can deal on a normal hit. This includes all temporary damage bonuses as well.

For example, a normal rapier deals damage equal to $1d8 +$ your Strength or Dexterity modifier, so its Parrying Power is equal to $8 +$ your Strength or Dexterity modifier. If it is also transmuted by the spell Elemental Weapon, which increases its damage by $1d4$, its Parrying Power is further increased by 4.

Parrying Stance: You can use your Action to focus on parrying attacks. You can use the Parry Reaction (see above) a number of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus without using a Reaction until the start of your next turn.

13 Spell Manipulation

It should be a fun option to play a caster.

To make a caster better suited for the new changes, new reactions should be added that fit the kit of any caster without making a caster too strong regarding the damage output. Therefore, we should focus on the identity of a caster: casting spells.

With this idea in mind, a caster can use their general understanding of magic in a way to alter the flow of magic around them. This can be used to enable a coven playstyle, which we rarely see, by buffing spells of each other. In addition, a caster gets new defensive tools, which are very situational, thereby leaving him in great danger of their martial enemies, looking at you, Rogue.

Prerequisites: To use any manipulation reaction (see below), you need to have the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature.

Spell Manipulation requires both somatic and verbal components and has a range of 60ft.

You can only use a manipulation reaction when you can see the caster whose spell you manipulate.

Spell Manipulation: Spell Manipulation is a new skill that is rolled with your Spellcasting Ability. As a spellcaster, you are automatically proficient with Spell Manipulation.

Expertise can be applied to Spell Manipulation.

If you have access to multiple Spellcasting Abilities, you may roll Spell Manipulation with any of those abilities.

Spell Manipulation Bonus: Your Spell Manipulation Bonus is the number you add to the roll when making a Spell Manipulation check, depending on the Spell Manipulation skill as described above.

Thwart: You can use a Reaction to try to thwart a spell attack that targets you or a creature you can see. Make a Spell Manipulation check. If the result is at least as high as the attack roll, the spell attack misses its target.

You can spend one of your spell slots to improve your roll by three times the spell slots level.

When trying to thwart a critical hit, you roll with disadvantage.

Weaken: You can use a Reaction to try to weaken the effect of a spell that requires a saving throw. Choose one affected creature that is either you or that you can see. They add your Spell Manipulation Bonus to their saving throw.

You can spend one of your spell slots instead to turn the saving throw into an automatic success.

Amplify: You can use a Reaction to amplify a spell that wasn't cast by you. Make a Spell Manipulation check against 10 + twice the spell level. On a success, the spell is cast as if it were one level higher.

You can spend one of your spell slots to automatically succeed.

Manipulative Stance: You can use your Action to focus on manipulating spells. You can use the Thwart Reaction (see above), Weaken Reaction (see above) and Amplify Reaction (see above) a number of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus without using a Reaction until the start of your next turn.

Part III

Adjustments

In this chapter, several particular rules changes are described. In some cases, only parts of existing rules are changed, in others, entire features are replaced with other ones. In some cases, these rules offer an optional variant to an existing feature, which is then accordingly marked as a variant.

Deceptively, there are also some rare cases where new features are introduced here. These are accordingly marked as new.

14 Combat

Grapple: When you want to grab a creature or wrestle with it, you can use the Attack action to make a special melee attack, a grapple. If you're able to make multiple attacks with the Attack action, this attack replaces one of them.

The target of your grapple must be no more than one size larger than you, and it must be within your reach. Using at least one free hand, you try to seize the target by making a grapple check, a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (their choice). If you succeed, you subject the target to the grappled condition. The condition specifies the things that end it, and you can release the target whenever you like (no action required).

Escaping a Grapple: A grappled creature can use its action to escape. To do so, it must succeed on a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check contested by your Strength (Athletics) check.

Moving a Grappled Creature: When you move, you can drag or carry the grappled creature with you, but your speed is halved, unless the creature is two or more sizes smaller than you.

Shove: Using the Attack action, you can make a special melee attack to shove a creature, either to knock it prone or push it away from you. If you're able to make multiple attacks with the Attack action, this attack replaces one of them.

The target of your shove must be no more than one size larger than you, and it must be within your reach. You make a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (their choice). If you win the contest, you either knock the target prone or push it 5 feet away from you.

15 Equipment

Shields: You benefit from half cover instead of gaining 2 AC. Remember that wearing a shield allows you to **block** attacks. Shields also have a Blocking Modifier of +5.

Armour: As explained in **AC-less defence**, the Armor Class of an armour will be converted to Damage Reduction. An armour that previously gave an Armor Class of 12, for example, will give +2 Damage Reduction instead of increasing the Armor Class of the wearer from the base Armor Class of 10 by +2.

Armours that allowed the wearer to add their whole or parts of their Dexterity modifier to their Armor Class do not give additional Damage Reduction based on that Dexterity modifier. Instead, **Dodging** is improved when wearing no Armour or Light Armour, and improved a bit when wearing Medium Armour, as listed below.

Name	Type	Damage Reduction	Dodging Modifier
Padded Armour	Light	1	+5
Leather Armour	Light	1	+5
Studded Leather Armour	Light	2	+5
Hide Armour	Medium	2	+2
Chain Shirt	Medium	3	+2
Scale Mail	Medium	4	+2
Breastplate	Medium	4	+2
Half Plate Armour	Medium	5	+2
Ring Mail	Heavy	4	0
Chain Mail	Heavy	6	0
Splint Armour	Heavy	7	0

16 Feats

With the given rule changes, some feats need to be changed, too. The descriptions given here contain the entire feat after the changes. If it is marked as a variant, you may still use the base feat instead.

16.1 Origin Feats

Savage Attacker (Variant): Whenever you roll damage for an attack, add a d6 to the dice pool and ignore the lowest die result.

16.2 General Feats

Defensive Duelist: You gain the following benefits.

- *Ability Score Increase:* Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- *Elegant Parry:* When you are using at least one Finesse weapon with which you are proficient to parry, make the Parry Check with advantage.
- *Potent Parry:* You add your Proficiency Bonus to the Parrying Power of

your Finesse weapons. If you have Expertise in Parrying, you add it twice instead.

Dual Wielder (Variant): You gain the following benefits.

- *Ability Score Increase:* Increase your Strength or Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- *Vengeful Parry:* Whenever you successfully parry an attack, you can take a Free Reaction or Reaction to make an attack against the attacker with one weapon you are wielding that was not part of your parry.
- *Quick Draw:* You can draw or stow two weapons that lack the Two-Handed property when you would normally be able to draw or stow only one.

Medium Armour Master: You gain the the following benefits.

- *Ability Score Increase:* Increase your Strength or Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- *Dexterous Wearer:* While wearing Medium Armour, your armour-based Dodging modifier is +3 instead of +2.

Heavy Armour Master: You gain the following benefits.

- *Ability Score Increase:* Increase your Constitution or Strength score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- *Heightened Damage Reduction:* While you're wearing Heavy Armour, you add your Proficiency Bonus to your Damage Reduction.

Shield Master: You gain the following benefits.

- *Ability Score Increase:* Increase your Strength score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- *Shield Expertise:* You gain Expertise with Shields.
- *Shield Bash:* If you attack a creature within 5 feet of you as part of the Attack action and hit with a Melee weapon, you can immediately bash the target with your Shield if it's equipped, making a shove attack. You can use this benefit only once on each of your turns.

- *Interpose Shield*: If you're subjected to an effect that allows you to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, you can take a Reaction to take no damage if you succeed on the saving throw and are holding a Shield.

Weapon Master: You gain the following benefits.

- *Ability Score Increase*: Increase your Strength or Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- *Mastery Property*: Your training with weapons allows you to use the mastery property of one kind of Simple or Martial weapon of your choice, provided you have proficiency with it. Whenever you finish a Long Rest, you can change the kind of weapon to another eligible kind.
- *Parrying Expertise*: You gain Expertise with Parrying.

16.3 Fighting Styles

Defence: While you're wearing Light, Medium, or Heavy Armour, you gain a +1 bonus to Damage Reduction.

Protection (Variant): You can use your Reaction to protect a creature within 5 feet of you from an attack that you can see that targets that creature. The attack targets you instead. Make a Blocking check. If the result is at least as high as the attack's attack roll, you block the attack, taking no damage from it.

You can use your Action to enter a Protective Stance, focusing on protecting creatures close to you and yourself. You can use the Reaction described above and the **Block** Reaction a number of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus without using a Reaction until the start of your next turn.

17 Spells

These spell changes are meant to bring spells in line with the new **AC-less defence**.

Barkskin: Level 2 Transmutation (Druid, Ranger). Casting Time: Bonus Action. Range: Touch. Component: V, S, M (a handful of bark). Duration: 1 hour.

You touch a willing creature. Until the spell ends, the target's skin assumes a bark-like appearance, and the target has a Damage Reduction of 4 if its Damage Reduction was lower before. Then, its Damage Reduction is increased by 3, for a minimum Damage Reduction of 7.

Using a Higher-Level Spell Slot: The Damage Reduction is increased by an additional 1 for each spell slot level above 2.

Blur: Level 2 Illusion (Sorcerer, Wizard). Casting Time: Action. Range: Self. Components: V. Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute.

Your body becomes blurred. For the duration, any creature has Disadvantage on attack rolls against you and your Missing Threshold increases by 5 for those attacks. An attacker is immune to this effect if it perceives you with Blindsight or Truesight.

Mage Armour: Level 1 Abjuration (Sorcerer, Wizard). Casting Time: Action. Range: Touch. Components: V, S, M (a piece of cured leather). Duration: 8 hours.

You touch a willing creature who isn't wearing armor. Until the spell ends, the target's Damage Reduction is increased by 3. The spell ends early if the target dons armor.

Shield: Level 1 Abjuration (Sorcerer, Wizard). Casting Time: Reaction, which you take when you are hit by an attack roll or targeted by the Magic Missile spell. Range: Self. Components: V, S. Duration: Instantaneous.

An imperceptible barrier of magical force protects you. The triggering attack or Magic Missile deal no damage.

18 Classes

18.1 Fighter

Battle Master - Parry: When using the Parry Reaction, you can expend one superiority die. You add the superiority die to the parry check. If the parry succeeds, you increase the Parrying Power by the maximum roll of your superiority die.

Battle Master - Evasive Footwork: When you move, you can expend one superiority die, rolling the die and adding the number rolled to your Missing Threshold until you stop moving.

Battle Master - Riposte: When you successfully block, dodge, or parry a melee attack, you can use a Free Reaction or Reaction and expend one superiority die to make a melee weapon against the attacking creature. If you hit, you add the superiority die to the attacks damage roll.

18.2 Monk

Unarmoured Defence: Instead of being converted to **Damage Reduction**, your Wisdom modifier is added to your **Dodging** checks.

Patient Defence: May instead be used to enter the **Evasive Stance**.

Deflect Missiles: May be used without using a Reaction as one use of the **Evasive Stance**.

Level 5: Serenity (new): When spending one or more Ki, you can instead spend the same amount of **Surge Dice**. You can also replace a part of the Ki cost with the same amount of **Surge Dice**.

For example, when spending 3 Ki, you may instead spend either 3 Surge Dice, 2 Surge Dice + 1 Ki, or 1 Surge Die + 2 Ki.

18.3 Ranger

Hunter - Uncanny Dodge: You make Dodging Checks with advantage. If you fail to dodge, you take half damage instead of full damage. If you fail a Dodge & Roll or all spots within 10 feet of you are occupied when making a Dodge & Roll, you do not fall prone.

Hunter - Multiattack Defence: When you use any Reaction to counter a creature's attack, you may use a singular Free Reaction or a singular Reaction to counter all following attacks made by the same creature this turn. Eligible Reactions include blocking, dodging, and parrying.

18.4 Rogue

Uncanny Dodge: You make Dodging Checks with advantage. If you fail to dodge, you take half damage instead of full damage. If you fail a Dodge & Roll or all spots within 10 feet of you are occupied when making a Dodge & Roll, you do not fall prone.

Level 5: Prepared Strike (new): When using Surge Dice to increase the damage of a Sneak Attack, the Surge Dice are d12 instead of d6.

19 Monsters

Reactions: Monsters have access to all of the new Reactions that they fulfil the prerequisites for.

Surge Dice: Monsters also get and can utilize Surge Dice.

Bonus Actions: Monsters that don't have any use for a Bonus Action will not convert it into an additional Reaction.

Parries: If a statblock of a creature features a parry reaction, it is replaced by the Parry Reaction above. Assume that the creature uses either its strongest wielded melee weapon or all its wielded melee weapons to parry, if possible.

Part IV

Tables

Here, you'll find all the tables spread throughout the book.

20 Extended Size Table

Size	Missing Threshold	Hit Area	Height or Length
Minus 5	30	$<2.5\text{mm}^2$	$<2.5\text{mm}$
Minus 4	28	$<10\text{mm}^2$	$<5\text{mm}$
Minus 3	26	$<40\text{mm}^2$	$<1\text{cm}$
Minus 2	24	$<1.5\text{cm}^2$	$<2\text{cm}$
Minus 1	22	$<6\text{cm}^2$	$<4\text{cm}$
Minuscule	20	$<25\text{cm}^2$	$<8\text{cm}$
Fine	18	$<100\text{cm}^2$	$<15\text{cm}$
Diminutive	16	$<400\text{cm}^2$	$<30\text{cm}$
Tiny	14	$<0.15\text{m}^2$	$<60\text{cm}$
Small	12	$<0.6\text{m}^2$	$<1.2\text{m}$
Medium	10	$<2.5\text{m}^2$	$<2.5\text{m}$
Large	8	$<10\text{m}^2$	$<5\text{m}$
Huge	6	$<40\text{m}^2$	$<10\text{m}$
Gargantuan	4	$<150\text{m}^2$	$<20\text{m}$
Colossal	2	$<600\text{m}^2$	$<40\text{m}$
Unmissable	0	$>600\text{m}^2$	$>40\text{m}$

Related to [AC-less defence](#).

21 Armour Table

Name	Type	Damage Reduction	Dodging Modifier
Padded Armour	Light	1	+5
Leather Armour	Light	1	+5
Studded Leather Armour	Light	2	+5
Hide Armour	Medium	2	+2
Chain Shirt	Medium	3	+2
Scale Mail	Medium	4	+2
Breastplate	Medium	4	+2
Half Plate Armour	Medium	5	+2
Ring Mail	Heavy	4	0
Chain Mail	Heavy	6	0
Splint Armour	Heavy	7	0
Plate Armour	Heavy	8	0

Related to [AC-less defence](#).

Part V

Appendix

Here, you'll find miscellaneous stuff that was created in relation to the main body in some way. Some of the stuff may be more useful than others. This is not meant to be a place worth visiting in case you are looking for good content.

22 Changes for vo.1

Vision & Focus - Escape Focus

- only against larger creatures
- only Acrobatics, not Stealth

AC-less defence - Damage Reduction

- only reduces non-magical damage

Surge Dice

- specified that their use has to be announced at the start of the action they are used with to clean up intent
- removed Tenacity (temp HP)

23 Changes for vo.2

Reactions - Free Reactions (new)

- every turn, in addition to a Reaction, you also have one Free Reaction that can be used for some stuff.

Vision & Focus

- More precise wording

- Switch Focus now takes a Free Reaction instead of a Reaction
- Switch Focus can also be used as a Free Action
- Draw Focus (new)
 - You can draw the focus of a creature somewhere else through various means.
- Losing Focus (new)
 - You now lose focus under certain circumstances.

AC-less defence

- Damage Reduction
 - now only reduces non-spell damage
 - cleaned up wording
- Shields
 - cleaned up wording

Blocking

- Blocking Bonus (new)
 - value to add to a blocking ability check
 - = 8 + either Strength mod or Dexmod + Proficiency (if proficient with shields)
- Defensive Stance & Protective Stance
 - limited the uses to the proficiency bonus

Dodging - Evasive Stance

- limited the uses to the proficiency bonus

Variable attack actions

- tried to add it, but the PHB was faster

24 Changes for vo.3

General

- reordered the chapters to make more sense

Reactions - Reserving Actions

- now only gives one Reaction per Action

Dodging

- added elaboration on the idea
- Dodging Bonus (new)
 - Value to add to a dodging ability check
 - = 5 + either Athletics or Acrobatics
- Dodge & Roll
 - increased distance to 10 feet

Parrying (new)

- you can now use a reaction to parry, nice
- Parrying Bonus
 - value to add to a parrying ability check
 - = 5 + attack bonus of the parry weapon
- Parry
 - allows you to parry a melee attack, potentially reducing it's damage to 0
- Parrying Stance
 - allows you to parry more
- Battle Master - Parry
 - reworked to fit
- Monster Parries
 - adjusted existing parries accordingly

Surge Dice

- usage needn't be announced at the start of an action anymore
- removed Regeneration
- Tenacity reintroduced
 - now only gives temporary HP until the start of your next turn
- Speed
 - no longer scales with the roll
 - gives 10ft. of movement speed per die spent on this option

- Skill (new)
 - add the roll to any one roll you make
 - replaces multiple other previous options
- Last Stand -> Dying Struggle
 - now only triggers once when dropping below 25 maxHP
- Elation
 - now triggers after applying the effects of the attack

25 Changes for vo.4

Spell Manipulation (new)

- possibility to do stuff with and against spells
- Thwart
 - make a spell attack miss
- Weaken
 - improve the saving throw for a creature affected by a spell
- Amplify
 - improve the spell of an ally

26 Changes for vo.5

General

- slightly better wording
- a few more links
- a bit more elaboration

Reactions

- Tripping up (new)
 - You can now make a shove attack as a Reaction to trip up a moving creature

AC-less defence

- Clarified intentions
- adjusted the Battle Masters' Evasive Footwork and Riposte
- adjusted the Hunters' Multiattack Defence
- adjusted the Dual Wielder Feat

Dodging - Dodging Bonus

- Now only takes Acrobatics (to buff DEX a bit)
- adjusted the Rogues' and Hunters' Uncanny Dodge

Parrying

- made multi-weapon-parrying possible
- adjusted the Defensive Duelist Feat

27 Changes for vo.6

General

- extracted **Adjustments** to their own chapter, featuring changes for Equipment, Class Features, Feats, Fighting Styles, Spells, and Monsters.
 - Shields no longer give damage reduction.
 - Buffed the Hunter's Multiattack Defence.
 - Changed Dual Wielder, Savage Attacker and Shield Master.
 - Added spell changes for Shield, Mage Armour, and Barkskin.
- Renamed the Backstab Advantage & Focus chapter to **Vision & Focus**. Added two paragraphs about Vision and rephrased a few things.

Reactions

- Added a paragraph on general reaction timing and cleaned up other descriptions throughout the rules accordingly.

AC-less defence

- Removed the Constitution Modifier from the base Damage Reduction.
- Defensive Reactions are now rolled with disadvantage against critical hits.

- Size now impacts Missing Threshold.

Dodging

- Dodging Bonus is reduced when wearing medium armour or heavy armour.
- Added passage that allows the use of the Evasive Stance as a Bonus Action for some characters.
- Made much of the wording more concise.
- Dodge & Roll can now also be used against area effects.

Blocking

- Blocking is now a skill that depends on shields.
- Moved the flat Blocking Bonus to shields themselves.

Parrying

- a bit cleaner now and also skill-ish.
- Now features a weapon lock mechanic.

Monk changes are new.

Spell Manipulation

- Spell Manipulation is now a skill and thus no longer starts with a flat bonus.
- Extracted reaction timing and line of sight to the caster to be prerequisites for all manipulation options. This is the same as before, but the options are now more quickly read.
- Thwart can now be buffed by spending a spell slot.
- Amplify can now fail, unless a spell slot is spent.
- Weaken can now turn the saving throw into a success when a spell slot is spent.

Surge Dice

- Added an option to improve Initiative.
- Restricted Power to Attack Rolls and Damage.

- Renamed Speed to Swiftess. You can now use the gained movement immediately.

28 Changes for vo.7

28.1 New

Aimed Strikes: Introduced to make attack rolls more meaningful.

Contests: Added a chapter about them, as they were removed from the 2024 rules.

Rogue: now gains a new Surge Die feature on level 5; Prepared Strike.

Spells: Added adjustments to Blur.

Feats: Added adjustments to Weapon Master.

28.2 Removed

from Surge Dice: Dying Struggle, Elation and Kill Rush.

28.3 Adjusted

General:

- Committed to 2024 rules. All changes are now in reference to 2024 rules.
- Put the context and rationale for the rules at the start of each section again.
- Moved Reflections to the Introduction.
- Added a chapter for tables.
- Added an appendix with past changelogs.

AC-less defence:

- Added an example for Armor Class to Damage Reduction conversion.

- Damage Reduction now applies to attacks instead, including spell attacks. This is meant to be a buff to Damage Reduction and meant to make it more intuitive when it applies and when it doesn't. This also restores the classic connection between attacks and armour.
- Removed Dodging from the list of reactions that can reduce attack damage to 0 and thus make the attack count as a miss, because Dodging explicitly states that a dodged attack misses.
- Added a new set of smaller sizes and changed multiple base Missing Thresholds.
- Added a table as a reference for the sizes.

Reactions:

- Free Reactions no longer reference Free Actions, as those are not part of the 2024 rules. They now refer to the free object interaction instead.
- Using the Ready action now gives an additional Reaction.
- Limited Prey on the Vulnerable to melee weapon attacks and tied it exclusively to the Incapacitated condition.

Vision & Focus:

- Focus can now be switched once at the end of your turn for free, instead of as a Free Action, because those no longer exist as of the 2024 rules.
- Losing Focus now depends on the Incapacitated condition or loss of perception.

Spell Manipulation:

- Limited range to 60ft.

Parrying:

- Named the value by which a parried attacks damage is reduced Parrying Power and added a separate paragraph about it.
- Explicated that temporary damage increases also increase Parrying Power.
- Critical Parries now have increased Parrying Power.

Equipment:

- Now features a table with armour stats.

Feats:

- Now offers the entire feat description.
- Moved Fighting Styles to this chapter.
- Rephrased and buffed Defensive Duellist.
- Made the changed Dual Wielder a variant instead of a replacement.
- Heavy Armour Master now uses the Proficiency Bonus, similar to the 2024 rules.
- Shield Master now forces an Athletics contest instead of a saving throw.

Classes:

- Moved all class changes into their own chapter.
- Moved the monk Surge Die feature to level 5.

Spells:

- Now offers the entire spell description.