

# Dungeons and Deuces – Rules v 0.9.2

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Dungeons and Deuces is a free roleplaying game that uses regular playing cards to resolve encounters. The core game mechanics are similar to a game of Poker, and drawing encounters is based on Black Jack. The result is an easy-to-learn game that balances luck and strategy. Intended for 3-4 Players, but may be played with 2 or 5.

## Materials and Getting Started

- The **Game Master (GM)** and each Player needs their own Deck of standard playing cards.
  - Remove jokers from all decks and shuffle them.
- At least 1 Deck of Enemies (printed from our site)
  - You may mix and match Enemy Sets or keep them as separate Decks.
- *Optional:* The GM also may use an additional Deck of playing cards as the “Loot Deck.”
  - This Deck is optional but recommended; otherwise you will need pen and paper.
- *Optional:* Class Cards (printed from our site), important resource for new Players.
  - Players pick a Class and start at Level 1.

## Target Difficulty

- **Target Difficulty** = 1 Player = 5 / 2 Players = 10 / 3 Players = 15 / \*4 Players = 20
  - **4 Players** may require the GM to use 2 Decks of cards
- **Encounter Difficulty** = The Difficulty of all Enemies Drawn added up

## Results

- If Encounter Difficulty is LESS than Target Difficulty
  - Players go first (no **Initiative Draw** required)
- If Encounter Difficulty is EQUAL to Target Difficulty
  - Players go first (no **Initiative Draw** required)
  - **Treasure:** The cost of Loot is reduced by one card at the end of the Encounter (*explained in Loot section*)
- If Encounter Difficulty is GREATER than Target Difficulty
  - **Treasure:** The cost of Loot is reduced by one card at the end of the Encounter

- **Initiative Draw:** GM and a Player Draw the top card from their Decks. The side with the higher value card goes 1st. Return cards to the bottom of the Decks. Players Win on Ties

## Encounter Setup

### *Players*

- Players Draw a 6 card Hand at Levels 1 and 2; At Level 3 and above, Players Draw 7 cards.
  - Players must Discard if their hand-size exceeds 10 cards at any time
- If a Player has no Discard Pile, they must Draw and Discard the top card from their Deck

### *Enemies*

- GM Draws Enemy Cards 1 at a time
  - Keep Drawing until the **Encounter Difficulty** is within 3 of the **Target Difficulty**
  - Like Black Jack, Players choose to have the GM Draw an additional Enemy Card or Stay
  - Draw Hands for each of the Enemies as indicated by their Enemy Cards
    - Enemies begin with Basic Abilities and gain their Elite ability when marked ELITE
      - They remain Elite at Levels higher than when they become Elite
    - The Level of the Enemies is equal to the current Player Level
  - Each of these Enemies is treated as its own separate hand

## Targeting and Turn Order

- Every Entity or Player on a side gets to **Attack** before it becomes the other side's turn. Turn order is decided by the Players or GM in the case of Enemies and may change each turn.
- The GM must target the Player with the highest card on top of their Discard Pile for Attack.
  - This card is referred to as the Player's **Threat Card**
    - If cards of the same value, targeting is at GM's discretion
  - GM may target a Player's controlled Entities, or **pets**, rather than the Player
- Enemy Abilities may be used on any Player of the GM's choice.

## Combat

- **Attacker** can Play a Single, Pair, Triple, Four of a Kind, or 5-card Poker Hand (or skip their turn).
- The **Defender** must match the Hand Played in number of cards. (Unless otherwise stated)

- A single may only be **successfully** countered with a Single of equal or greater value, a pair with a pair, a triple with a triple, a four of a kind with a four of a kind, or a 5 card hand with a 5 card hand.
  - You can Attack an enemy with a valid hand of any size, regardless of how many cards they have left. If they can't Defend it, they are Defeated (unless they Win as a result of an Ability).
- If you can't **Defend** the amount of cards Played with a valid hand, you must still Play an equal amount of cards, but you can't Tie or Win regardless of the value of cards Played.
- A 5-Card Hand is Valid ONLY if all 5 cards are used, such as with a Full-House, Straight, and Flush.
- All cards Played are Discarded (unless otherwise stated).
- Players may use an Ability and/or Attack once on their turn unless the Ability reads "*Instead of Attacking*," in which case the Ability can only be used in place of 1 Attack.
  - If the Player can Attack 2 or more times thanks to the effect of another Ability, only 1 Attack is consumed when using the "*Instead of Attacking*" Ability.

### *Evaluation*

- For Singles, Pairs, Triples, and Four of a Kinds, only the value of the cards matters.
  - Cards may exceed the value of an Ace with Abilities or Loot.
  - Examples: a 7 beats a 6; a Queen beats a Jack; an Ace beats a King (suits don't matter)
- 5 Card hands are decided by Poker rules (suits don't matter).
  - 4 of a kinds cannot be Defended by 5 card Hands
- Wild Cards or value adjustments take effect before combat is resolved and may be chained.
- Abilities can raise a card's value higher than an Ace.

### *Resolution*

- The winner of a Combat hand Draws cards equal to the amount of cards that he/she Played.
- If Combat is a Tie, both the Attacker and Defender Draw cards as if they'd Won.
  - Both Wins and Ties are considered **success** in Combat for Drawing purposes

### *Victory and Defeat*

- A Player or Enemy is **Defeated** when they have no cards left.
  - Player/Enemy controlled-entities are NOT Defeated when their master is Defeated
- If all Players are Defeated, they must shuffle their Discard Piles back into their Decks.
- Upon Victory all remaining cards left in players' hands are Discarded.
  - *Remember to finish battles and draw to the end – this is XP after all!*
- If the last remaining Player is Defeated at the same time as the last enemy, Players Win

## Enemy Types (Basic, Elite, Boss)

- **Basic:** Can only use the Basic (top) Ability; cannot Attack with 4 or 5 Card hands.
- **Elite:** May use both Basic and Elite (bottom) Abilities; cannot Attack with 4 or 5 Card hands.
- **Boss:** May use both Basic and Elite Abilities; CAN Attack with 4 or 5 Card hands.

## Loot

- There are 3 tiers of "Loot" and 3 ways to acquire it
- Whenever a Player receives Loot, they draw a card from the **Loot Deck**
- Whenever the Player Draws a card from their own deck through the normal flow of the game with the same suit and value as a Loot Card they own, it has the following special properties:
  - **Common** – The card may be played as itself or 1 value higher.
  - **Rare** – The card counts for two its kind (may be played as a Pair by itself or with other cards).
  - **Epic** – WILD! The card can count as any card.
- Loot cards are placed next to the Player's Deck face-up as a reminder:
  - *Keep track of tiers however you'd like – location, orientation, etc...*
  - *If you don't have an extra Loot Deck, shuffle the GM deck, Draw a card and make a note of which card is Drawn on a piece of paper.*

### *How to get loot*

- At the End of an encounter Loot is given to Players according to the number of 2s in their Hands.
  - Pair of 2s = **Common** / Three 2s = **Rare** / Four 2s = **Epic**
- Players can only have up to 5 pieces of loot at once, but they can trade up for improvements

- Trade 2 **Commons** for 1 **Rare** / Trade 2 **Rares** for 1 **Epic**

## Leveling Up

- When a Player goes through their entire Deck, all Players Level Up.
  - Their Discard Piles are reshuffled and become their Decks.
  - If a Player runs through their Deck in the middle of an Encounter, they shuffle their Discard Pile, draw a new Threat Card, and continue to use it as their Deck; however, Leveling doesn't occur until after combat, at which point the rest of the players must shuffle their Discard Piles back into their decks.
- **At Level 3 Players' Initial Draw Size grows to 7.**
- Levels also grant access to new Abilities as described by the Class Cards.
- **OPTIONAL: For a faster-paced game, level up after every Encounter.**

# Additional / Optional Rules

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## Order of Operations

- Abilities, Attacks, and Defenses all occur in the order that they were presented.
  - Abilities marked (**Disrupt**) have the capacity to change or prevent the last action taken.
- You may not blurt out an action while another Player or the GM is in the middle of performing an action. So once the intent has been declared, nothing can occur before that action is presented except a Disrupt Ability.

## Miscellaneous Optional Rules

- Players may **GUARD** instead of Attacking or using an Ability during their turn, which allows them to Discard a card and Draw a card
- Add/subtract from Target Difficulty to adjust Difficulty
- Players may trade loot with each other
- Feel free to allow a single Player to play 2 or 3 classes – the game works best with 2-3 characters playing, although certain characters can do well alone.

## Folding

Being a punching bag is not a whole lot of fun, and an experienced GM will know when he or she is beaten, so feel free to concede an Encounter to the Players by **Folding**.

- A GM can Fold at any time

- Players may Draw cards equal to the number of cards that the Enemies had left when the GM Folds. This is to ensure they receive an appropriate amount of experience and chance for Loot.

## **Custom Abilities**

Custom Abilities add an optional layer of customization to classes. Incorporating them into the game is easy:

- Each Player chooses a Custom Ability at the beginning of the game
- Place the Custom Ability card beneath your Class card so that only the chosen ability is visible.
- Now your character can use that ability as instructed for the remainder of the game.

# For Beginners - Quest for Power

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This is the simplest of all game types and is recommended for first time players. The objective is to reach “Level 6” – in other words, go through your entire Deck as a Level 5. If one of the Players manages to do this, the game is complete. Players reshuffle their Discard Piles into back into their Decks if the whole Party is Defeated.

## Competitive Game Types

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### Quest for Loot

A great fit for fans of Poker, **Quest for Loot** introduces simple gambling mechanics. What you use as **chips** is entirely up to you, jelly beans, quarters, or human souls, the stakes are yours to decide.

- Players begin with an equal number of chips.
- The GM’s initial chip count is equal to all of the players’ chips added together.
  - Example: If there are 3 players against the GM with 7 chips a piece, the GM starts with 21 chips.
  - *If playing for higher stakes, these chips should be disbursed from a communal pot.*
- The game may begin at whichever Level is decided upon; we recommend Level 3.
- Before every Encounter, Players draw their hand and place **Wagers**.
  - Every Player must Wager at least 1 chip at the beginning of an Encounter (The Blind). At 1 chip, their Target Difficulty is set to the standard 5.
  - Each Player can Wager additional chips to increase their individual Target Difficulty by 1 per chip.
  - All other Players must match the highest bid to participate in the Encounter.
    - The GM still takes their Blind if they do not participate.
- Once all Wagers are set, add up the Target Difficulties of the **remaining** Players.
  - *Example: If of 3 Players, two bid 3 and the third Player folds, the Target Difficulty for the Encounter would be 14 ((5+2) + (5 + 2))*
- The GM begins Drawing Enemy cards and continues Drawing until the Target Difficulty is met or exceeded. **Players can’t choose to “stay” beneath the Target Difficulty.**

- At this point, the Players may choose to raise, but do not have to match each other's bet amount.
- As long as the combined raises don't bring the new Target Difficulty over the current Difficulty of the Encounter, no additional Enemies are drawn.
- Regular Initiative Rules Apply
- If a Player Survives the Encounter, the GM must pay them an amount equal to their bet.
  - If a Player does not Survive the Encounter, the GM collects that Player's bet.

## Masters and Monsters

This mode requires no GM; instead, control over the Enemies is divided amongst the Players. It's a great party game for experienced Dungeons and Deuces players. Players can win by defeating other players and keeping their monsters alive, but having the whole party wiped out isn't good for anyone.

- Begin at Level 1. Players Draw hands and flip over their Threat Cards as usual.
- Then each Player Draws Enemy Cards until they equal or exceed a difficulty value of 5.
  - All Enemies' hands are drawn from the same communal *Enemy* deck.
  - Their cards are Discarded into the same communal *Enemy* Discard Pile.
- Players **ALWAYS** have Initiative in this mode.
  - The Player that drew the lowest difficulty of Enemies goes first.
    - In case of a tie, the Player with more Enemies goes first.
    - If two or more Players drew the same difficulty and same number of Enemies, they must Draw the top cards from their Decks; higher cards go first.
- A Player takes his or her Hero Character's Turn first, then it's their Enemies' Turn before the next Player gets to go
  - Once every Players' Hero and Enemies have gone, the Round is over.
  - *Once per Turn* abilities can be used once during an Enemy's Turn and once during a Hero's Turn every Round.
- Players cannot Attack their own Enemies, nor can their own Enemies Attack them.
  - Other than that, Enemies must follow the same targeting rules as when played by a GM.
    - *The Player with the highest Threat Card must be targeted for Attack, though Abilities may be used on any valid target.*



- **The first Player to get “X” Epic Loot cards wins.** (*3 is good for a medium duration game*)
  - As usual, Loot is gained by the amount of Deuces in a Player’s hand at the end of an Encounter; 2 = Common Loot / 3 = Rare Loot / 4 or more = Epic
  - There are additional ways to acquire Deuces for loot at the end of an encounter:
    - Defeating a Player with your Enemies adds 2 Deuces
    - Surviving an Encounter adds 1 Deuce per Survivor
      - So if 3 Players Survived, each of them receive 3 Deuces
  - As usual, Players can trade up 2 Commons for a Rare or 2 Rares for an Epic.

## Duel of the Duos

This is a great mode for a quick competitive game between 2 Players. It requires no GM or Enemy Deck. Players Draw a hand for each of their chosen Classes. *No Threat Cards are required.*

- Each Player Draws 3 Hero Classes and 3 Custom Ability cards at random.
  - They choose 2 out of the 3 Hero Classes and which 2 Custom Abilities to use.
- Draw for Initiative or concede Initiative.
  - The Player without Initiative may Draw an extra card for 1 of their Heroes.
- Both of a Player’s Heroes have their turn before it becomes the other Player’s turn.
- Win an Encounter by Defeating both of your opponent’s Heroes.
- Begin at Level 1. Both Players gain a Level after each Encounter. **The best out of 5 wins!**

# Cooperative -Traditional Quest

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Traditional Quests are custom story-driven games that take place within a structured environment, similar to a Dungeons and Dragons campaign. They allow for plenty of flexibility and creativity on the Game Master's part and can be short or long duration games depending on the quest.

## Special Encounters

Special Encounters cards are comprised of 3 sections

1. **Setup:** The top portion of the card tells the GM how many cards and hands to Draw as well as other preparations needed to be made at the beginning of an Encounter.
2. **Abilities:** The middle portion of the card displays the Abilities and Effects contained by the Special Encounter. Since some Encounters may contain multiple entities, abilities may be attributed by first naming the entity to which it belongs.
3. **Secret:** The bottom portion is hidden from Players' view by placing a card over it. This section can contain an optional weaknesses or hidden Abilities that the Special Encounter might have. It is revealed once the Players discover it.

## Fixed and Random Encounters

A Traditional Quest gives the GM more control over the Encounters that Players face.

- **Fixed:** Predetermined Level of Enemies and modified difficulty. The GM may choose which enemies to use so long as the enemies equal the **Modified Target Difficulty**.
  - These encounters form barriers of passage for players and work well for boss or special encounters; they can even be used for things like traps or trick walls.
  - Fixed Encounters may list an Enemy or Special Encounter, Level, and Modifier.
    - Modifiers are added to or subtracted from the 5-per-Player standard Target Difficulty. (So -2 would make the Target Difficulty 3-per-Player, or +1 would make the Target Difficulty 6-per-Player)
      - Example 1: Boss Name, LVL 5, -2
        - Players face the Special Encounter listed and Level 5 Enemies drawn to Modified Target Difficulty
      - Example 2: LVL 4, +1
        - Players face Level 4 Enemies drawn to Modified Target Difficulty
      - Example 3: Boss Name, -1

- Players face the Special Encounter listed and Enemies of their current level drawn to Modified Target Difficulty
- Example 4: -1
  - Player face an Encounter of their Level drawn to Modified Target Difficulty
  - Fixed Encounters abide by Initiative Draw & Loot Bonus rules (regardless of LVL)
- **Random:** Standard “Black Jack Rules” drawing for an encounter
  - Good for when Players are traveling or to set up an impromptu battle

### Roleplaying and creativity are rewarded!

- As the GM, you’re encouraged to reward Player creativity and good roleplaying.
- If a Player is attempting to overcome an Encounter in a creative way, you can grant them a bonus to their Initial Draw Size.
- You can give Loot or bonus Deuces to Loot checks at the end of an Encounter at your discretion.

### Unique Loot

- Create your own unique pieces of Loot for a campaign containing custom abilities
- Players who receive Quest Loot put the Jokers back into their Deck and Sacrifice a Joker to activate a piece of Quest or Special Loot (unless otherwise stated)
  - Players with multiple Quest Loot may choose which to use when Sacrificing a Joker
- **Items are purchased in shops with cards from Discard Piles.**
  - Shuffle Discard Pile before paying, draw desired amount with cards face down.
- **Jokers count as Ace +1s when used as Threat Cards.**

## Glossary

- **Play:** Refers to cards used in Attack or Defense during Combat/Challenges.
- **Attack:** Attacker chooses which cards and what hand size to play. The GM must target the Player with the highest card atop their Discard Pile to Attack.
- **Defend:** Respond to Attacks by playing hands of the same amount of cards. Only the target of the Attack may Defend the Attack unless otherwise stated.
- **Threat Card:** The card presently on top of the Player's Discard Pile; the Player with the highest Threat Card is targeted by the GM for Attack
- **Sacrifice:** Refers to cards that are purposefully Discarded to activate Abilities. *All Sacrifices count as Discards, but not all Discards count as Sacrifices.*
- **Success:** Success is achieved if you Tie or Play a higher hand than your opponent's
- **Wild Range:** Cards may count as a value between this Range but can't change suits. Wild Range displayed as X-Y denotes a min(X)-max(Y) range; X may be negative. *Example: a 6 of Hearts with a Wild Range of -2-2 can count as a 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 of Hearts.* A single-number Wild Range with a "+" in front of it is additive, meaning its value is added to the max of any existing Wild Ranges.
- **Encounter:** An entire battle from start to finish
- **Player Turn:** The phase during which Players Attack. There is no set turn order.
- **Enemy Turn:** The phase during which Enemies Attack. There is no set turn order.
- **Round:** Refers to both a Player Turn and an Enemy Turn.
- **Disrupt:** This ability can be used to change or prevent the effect of the last action taken.
- **Discard Pile:** A pile of Discarded cards separate from your Deck or hand.
- **\*Hand:** May refer to the cards a Player or Entity have left, or to a set of cards that was Played.
- **Entity:** A player, enemy, summoned pet or boss.
- **Enemy Difficulty Value:** The large number displayed in the top right and bottom left of an Enemy card; an approximation of the challenge presented by the Enemy
- **Encounter Difficulty:** The Difficulty Values of all Enemies Drawn added up
- **Target Difficulty:** This value is a guide for an Encounter of average difficulty. For 1 player the Target Difficulty is 5, for 2 players it's 10, for 3 Players it's 15, and for 4 Players it's 20, but this may require the GM to use an additional deck.

- **Hit:** Draw an additional Enemy Card
- **Stay:** Draw no additional Enemy Cards
- **Ally:** In the case of Players, “Ally” refers to all Players. In the case of an Enemy, “Ally” refers to all Enemies. An Ability that targets an Ally can target the user as well unless it reads “another Ally.”
- **Face Card:** Jack, Queen, King
- **Negate:** Discard all cards in an Attack that has been Negated; do not Draw as a result of Play
- **Seal:** A sealed Ability becomes unusable
- **Fold:** The GM can concede an Encounter at any time, allowing Players to Draw cards equal to the amount that the Enemies had left.
- **Summon:** When “summoning” an Entity, Draw its cards from the top of your Deck and place it in front of you. This entity is under your control and can act independently, using an Ability and/or Attacking once on your turn. These Entities are referred to as **Pets**.
- **Pets:** Pets are summoned Entities. Unless otherwise stated, they can Attack and/or Defend on the turn in which they are summoned. They can benefit from their summoner’s Loot Cards. At the end of an encounter, a Pet’s remaining cards are placed in their summoner’s Discard Pile.
- **Survive:** A Player is said to have “survived” if they have 1 or more cards left in their Hand at the end of an Encounter.
- **Initial Draw Size:** The amount of cards a Player draws at the beginning of an Encounter. 6 at levels 1 and 2; 7 at levels 3 and above.