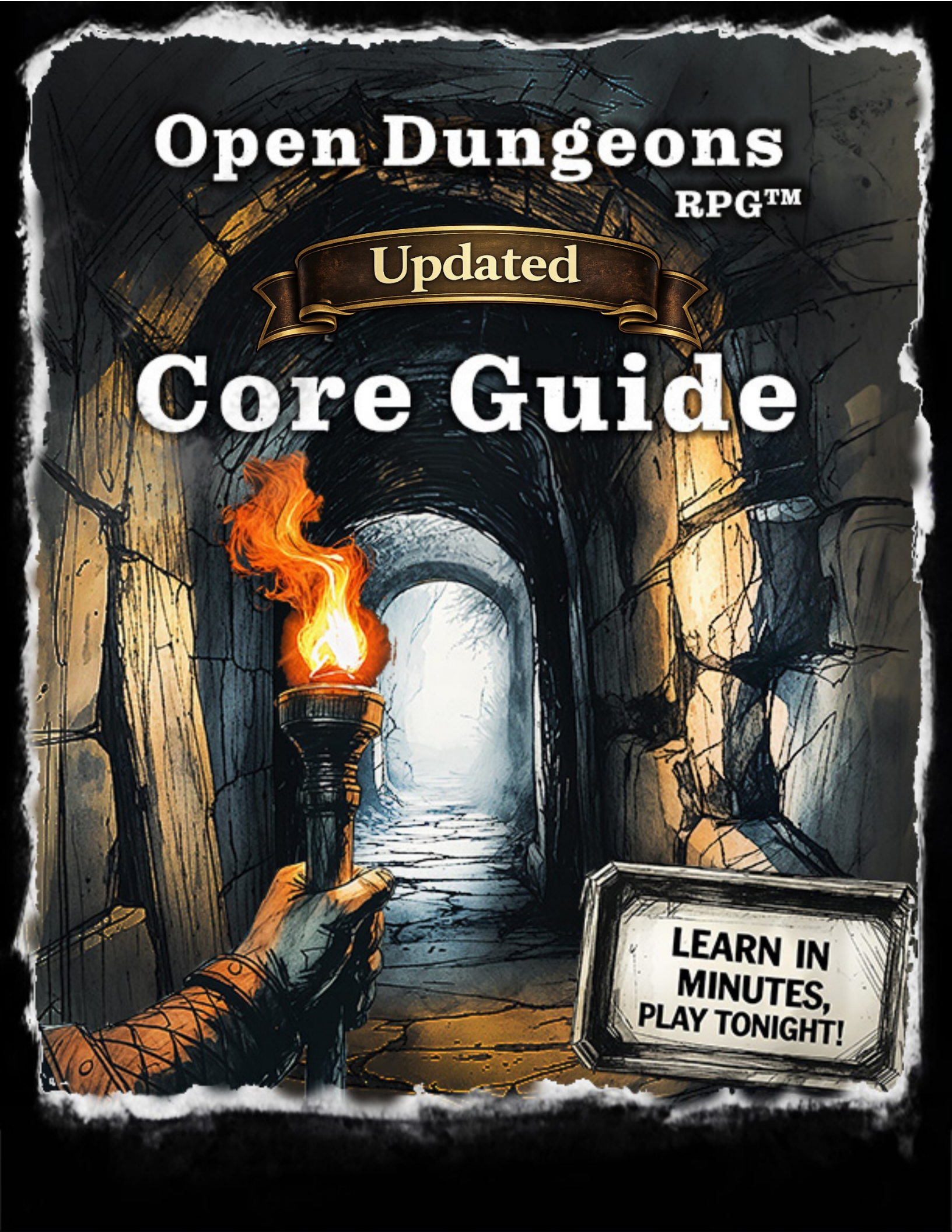
Open Dungeons RPG™

Updated

Core Guide

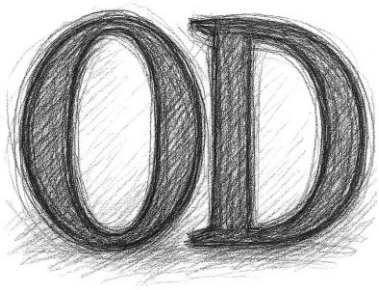


Open Dungeons RPG™

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Core Guide



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Introduction

Open Dungeons™ is a modern fantasy roleplaying game built for tables that want to play, not prep.

Most tabletop role-playing games today demand days, if not weeks, of reading before your first session. Hundreds of pages, dozens of subsystems, endless character options that require spreadsheet planning. They're designed like textbooks, not games.

Open Dungeons™ takes the opposite approach. The Core Guide is 10 pages. Character creation takes only several minutes. The rules are simple enough to teach at the table.

This is modern game design - built for people with jobs, families, and a hundred other obligations demanding your time. Armor reduces damage instead of bloating armor class. Saving Rolls work the same way no matter the threat. The DN (Dungeon Narrator) has authority to make calls at the table instead of flipping through rulebooks mid-scene. These aren't shortcuts or compromises. They're intentional design choices that keep you in the adventure instead of trying to figure out rules or arguing over edge cases.

No Arms Race

Most RPGs force endless escalation. Characters get stronger, so monsters need bigger numbers to stay threatening. By the mid-levels a goblin is irrelevant, and a dragon needs a +15 bonus just to land a blow.

Open Dungeons™ avoids this. Monsters don't rely on inflated bonus stats - they scale through numbers, tactics, HP relative to the party, yet the world remains as exciting and deadly as players expect, no matter their level.

Built to Make Dungeon Narrators

The biggest barrier to playing isn't finding players - it's finding someone willing to run an adventure. Players outnumber GMs and DMs many to one, not because it's hard, but because most games make it feel impossible.

Open Dungeons™ fixes this. The guides are not buried in 1,000 pages. Encounter building follows a simple formula. If you've ever wanted to run a game but thought you needed to memorize hundreds of pages first, you don't. You already know enough. This is the system that lets you prove it to yourself.

If a guide doesn't make the game more fun, it doesn't belong here. What remains is a complete fantasy RPG that respects your time and your imagination. You don't need to be a scholar to run a great game.

Learn today, play tonight.

Open Dungeons™

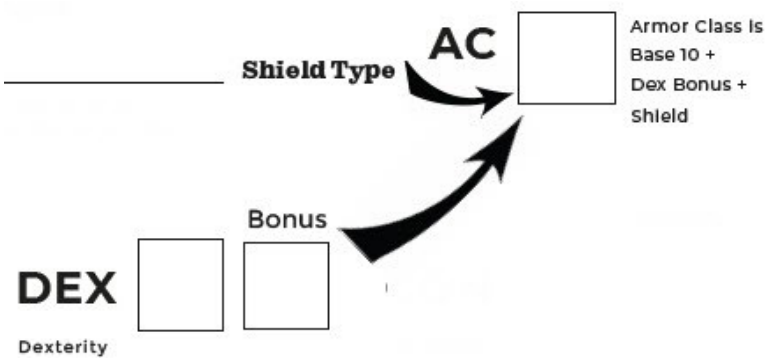
Dungeon Narrator (DN)

The DN is the storyteller and referee of the game. Players describe their actions - the DN narrates the results. For an in-depth understanding refer to the DN Guide book.

Armor Class (AC)

Armor Class Is Base 10 + Dex Bonus + Shield

AC is how hard it is to strike a character or creature when attacking. It starts at 10 + Dexterity bonus + shield.



Attack rolls must meet or beat a target's AC to land a hit.

Example:
The defender has +2 Dexterity and a +2 added for shield, for AC 14. You must roll 14 or higher on a d20 to hit.

See *Armor and Gear* book for Armor DR values.

Damage Reduction (DR)

DR is how much incoming physical damage is blocked by armor. After a successful hit and any saving throw, subtract DR from the damage. A natural 20 on an attack ignores DR.

DR (Damage Reduction):
DR reduces all Physical damage types: Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing, Fire, Cold, Lightning, Thunder, Acid, Force, Radiant, and Necrotic. DR does NOT reduce Psychic, Poison, Disease, or Suffocation damage.

Rolling a natural 20 during an attack ignores DR damage reduction value.

Example:
You roll 1d6 for damage and get 5. The target's chain mail has DR 3, so you deal 2 HP damage.

Ability Scores

Each ability influences how you interact with the world - from breaking doors to persuading kings.

Strength breaks chains. Wisdom avoids them.

DEX = Dexterity
CON = Constitution
STR = Strength
CHA = Charisma
WIS = Wisdom
INT = Intelligence

Ability	Bonus Applies To	Example Chances of Success
STR	Melee weapon damage, Chance rolls	Lifting, breaking, pushing, climbing, etc.
DEX	AC, Dex Quick saves, Chance rolls	Sneaking, balancing, etc.
CON	Con Tough saves, Chance rolls	Holding breath, resisting poison, etc.
WIS	Wis Mind saves, Chance rolls	Noticing danger, common sense, etc.
INT	Chance rolls	Investigative, recalling, etc.
CHA	Chance rolls	Persuasion, intimidation, performance, social influence, etc.

How to determine Ability Scores?

Roll 4d6, drop the lowest, roll 6 times, assign as you like. But if your DN states otherwise, it is their decision.

Score	Bonus
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9 - 10	0
11 - 12	+1
13 - 14	+2
15 - 16	+3
17 - 18	+4
19+	+5

All classes have 1 primary ability stat that must be met:

Fighter - minimum Strength 16
Wizard - minimum Intelligence 16

Cleric - minimum Wisdom 16
Thief - minimum Dexterity 16

How Do Bonuses Work?
If you have a + value (i.e. +2), then you would add it to your roll.

Example:
You try to dodge a collapsing ceiling. DN sets Chance Target Number (TN) to 15. You roll d20 (13) + Dex bonus (+2) = 15. You met the TN and succeeded.

Hit Points (HP)

Character's life points. At 0 HP your character is dead.

See Character Builder page 9 for Resting - Hit Point Recovery.

Save Rolls

All characters start at Level 1 with Save Roll 15 Target Number (TN). Then reduce the Save Roll Target Number by 1 per level advancement. Roll d20 + relevant Ability Bonus ≥ Target Number (TN is 16 - character level).

DEX Quick - dodge/evade danger.
CON Tough - endure harm to the body.
WIS Mind - resist influence on thoughts, mind, or senses.

To save, you must roll Target Number (TN is 16 - character level) or greater with 1d20. At level 1, your starting TN is 15 for DEX Quick, CON Tough and WIS Mind.

DEX Quick - examples:	CON Tough - examples:	WIS Mind - examples:
Dive from an explosion	Resist venom from bite	Resist charming spell
Leap clear of a collapsing ceiling	Withstand a poison gas	Stand against fear
Avoid a swinging blade trap	Endure disease exposure	Disbelieve illusion
Jump from a sudden pit opening	Shake off paralysis	Shake off sleep spell
Sprint past a closing portcullis	Survive a deathly curse	Resist possession
Move from rolling boulder's path	Hold breath vs drowning	Resist a vampire's gaze
Dodge Lightning Bolt spell	Push through blizzard	Resist hallucinations
	Stave off exhaustion	

Chance Rolls (Chances of Success)

Also called a "Check Roll"

A Chance Roll is used when a character attempts something risky they could reasonably try.

The DN sets a Target Number (TN). Roll a d20 + the relevant Ability Bonus. If your total meets or beats the TN, you succeed.

Example:
You try to leap a wide pit. The DN sets TN 14. You roll a d20 +3 Strength bonus. A 11 or greater roll on 1d20, you succeed - you've cleared the gap.

Note:
A bonus might be added or subtracted depending on mechanics. If you rolled an 11 and then add your +3 Strength bonus, same results.

Examples of Chance Rolls Table

Roll d20 + relevant ability bonus ≥ Chance.

Task	Who Can Try	Ability Used	TN
Climb a tree or wall	Anyone	Strength	12
Sneak past a guard	Anyone	Dexterity	15
Recall ancient lore	Anyone	Wisdom	14
Search and find trap	Anyone	Intelligence	13
Notice trap by chance	Anyone	Wisdom	16
Jump a pit	Anyone	Strength	10
Tell a convincing lie	Anyone	Charisma	16
Pick Locks	Thief with exception - see Thief Default Class Abilities		
Remove Traps	Thief with exception - see Thief Default Class Abilities		

Note:
Only certain classes may attempt some tasks (e.g., picking locks or disarming traps is restricted to Thieves). Allowing others would be like letting a Fighter cast a spell.

Leveling

Adventures occur every 3 months to 2 years in game time.

Leveling never occurs during adventures, but only after, giving the character time to have learned their new skills and abilities - trained for the earned level. Though levels may be awarded in real-world time, after a game session.

All characters start at level 1.

Experience

Player characters earn 100 XP per hour of gameplay at the table.

The DN can decide to add or subtract to level XP requirements, and/or give or take away from your session.

Level 1 = 0 XP
Level 2 = 2,000 XP
Level 3 = 4,000 XP

Every level after level 3 is another 2,000 more XP, each, up to level 10.

DN can add or subtract XP per session or adventure as they see fit, and/or change XP needed per level for their game.

Some DN's may penalize players for not showing, for talking on phone, etc. or reward for doing heroic deeds, or saving party from certain death.

Order of Battle

Characters take turns declaring what they do. DN decides what order per combat encounter.

Turn - a character's turn to do something, lasts about 5 seconds (in adventure time).

Round - a round is when everyone, including monsters, has taken a turn.

Who goes first? You, companions, NPC's or monsters?

DN decides who goes first in combat: it's relative to setup, scene, character decisions, etc.

Your Turn - Your Action

"Action" is a specific thing a character does on their turn (cast a spell, attack, dash, etc.).

"Turn" is you declaring your action.

"Round" occurs after everyone, including monster(s) had their turn.

Action = Turn

On your turn (your action), you may move and take one significant action, such as attacking, casting a spell, etc.

Dual-Wielding

A character may choose to wield two 1-handed weapons, such as a short sword and a dagger. By doing so, they cannot use a shield and forgo its +2 AC.

If their primary melee attack misses, they may use the momentum to immediately make a second attack roll with their off-hand weapon.

If this off-hand attack hits, it deals the weapon's base damage only (do not add the character's Strength bonus). A natural 20 does not double this damage.

Once used, an off-hand momentum attack is unavailable on the next turn, then becomes available again on the following turn.

Melee Weapon Combat

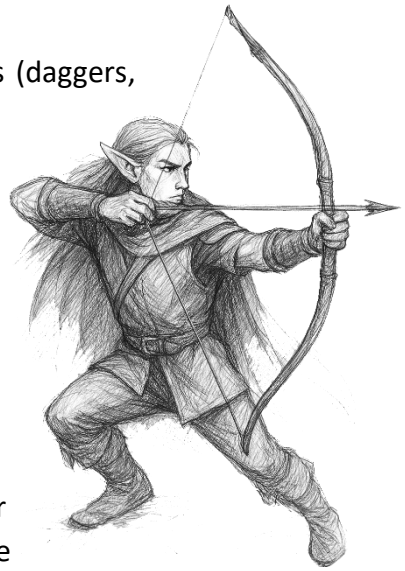
Attacking, to hit:
Roll d20 vs target AC. No ability bonus to attacks.

Damage:
Roll weapon damage + Strength bonus. Apply armor DR after any save reductions. Natural 20 ignores DR and is two times (x 2) damage.

Reach:
Spears, polearms, and long weapons may strike from the second rank or over allies.

Ranged Combat

Attacking, to hit:
Roll d20 vs target AC. No ability bonus to attacks.



Damage:
Weapon damage only. Strength bonus applies only to thrown weapons (daggers, spears, hand-axes). Composite bows add Str bonus.

Range bands:

Near (0-30 ft): no penalty
Far (31-90 ft): -1 to hit. At 4th level no penalty.
Extreme (91-180 ft): −3 to hit (most thrown weapons can't reach). At 6th level no penalty.

Reload:
Bows, light crossbows, and hand crossbows shoot every round.

Medium crossbow reloads 2 rounds (shoot every 2nd round) and heavy or greater crossbows 3 rounds (shoot every 3rd round). At 5th level these values drop by 1 round.

Shooting in melee (close quarters combat):
-4 to hit. At 5th level -2.

Unarmed Combat

Attacking, to hit (punching, elbowing, etc.):
Roll 1d20, then add + STR Bonus + your level. If the total is equal to or greater than the target AC, the hit is successful.

Damage:
1 point of damage or Strength bonus whichever is greater. DR applies.

Grappling / Wrestling:
Both creatures roll d20 + Strength bonus + Level. The higher result wins and may restrain, knock down, or hold the target.

Natural 20:
Attacker may knock the target down, stagger them (lose their next action), or push them 5 feet. DN decides.

Spell Attack and Defense

Attacking with spell, spell caster just casts at target. Target makes Save Roll against spell type. Type of Save Roll is suggested in the spell stats, but if DN decides otherwise: Pick the Save Roll by spell essence, with this guide below:

Dex Quick - dodging stuff you can physically avoid
Bursts, lines, cones, rays, volleys, falling rubble, slick floors.

Con Tough - withstanding harm to the body
Fire, cold, thunder, acid, necrotic burn, petrify, poison gas, disease.

Wis Mind - resisting influence on thoughts or senses
Charm, fear, sleep, hold, suggestion, possession, illusions.



Spells state the type and amount of damage, and whether a successful Save Roll reduces damage to zero or to half.

DR applies if physical damage. Not Psychic, Poison, Disease, Curse or Suffocation damage, or similar effects.

Natural 20 save, the spell can accidentally affect the caster. DN decides per spell at that moment. This is called Magic Backlash see DN Guide.

Examples of Natural 20 save roll against spell:

Searing Lances reflects back at caster.
Beguile charm spell makes caster infatuated with the target.

Natural 1 save, take 25% more damage, or suffer a worse condition, DN choice per spell.

For each level a Wizard or Cleric gains, add +1 to the target's Save Roll TN.

For example: a 3rd level Wizard's spells require targets to roll against a TN that is 3 higher than the base.

Ongoing effects:
If a spell persists, the target may attempt the listed save at the end of each of its turns to end the effect early.

Alignments

Optional Reading

In Open Dungeons™, alignment does not apply to player characters. You have full agency to decide how your character thinks and acts in the world. No chart, grid, or label can dictate your choices - your character's morality and personality are entirely yours to roleplay.

For the World:
Alignments exist to describe how races, cultures, factions, and monsters are generally viewed. It is not an absolute law - individuals may differ - but it provides a shorthand for how most of the world understands a group's tendencies.

There will always be exceptions, but the value of alignment lies in agreement. If you mention a demon in conversation, nearly everyone shares the same expectation of cruelty and danger. If you mention a unicorn, the same agreement exists around purity and kindness. Alignments are the cultural shorthand that makes those assumptions possible.

Top - Laws and Structure (X-Axis)
This is about how a creature relates to rules, order, and authority.

Orderly:
Respects hierarchy, routines, or natural laws. These creatures thrive in systems and usually enforce rules.

Impartial:
Indifferent to laws or rules. They follow them when convenient, ignore them when not.

Wild:
Rejects laws and structure outright. These creatures value freedom, instinct, or chaos above imposed order.

Side - Treatment of Others (Y-Axis)
This is about how a creature values or disregards the well-being of others.

Kind:
Respects life, acts with compassion or mercy, even toward enemies.

Impartial:
Neutral toward others. Neither kind nor cruel; decisions are pragmatic or situational.

Vile:
Disregards life, thrives on cruelty, selfishness, or malice. Others are tools, prey, or obstacles.

Alignment Grid

	Orderly	Impartial	Wild
Kind	**Guardian** enforces order with compassion	**Mediator** promotes fairness and harmony	**Liberator** brings freedom and kindness
Impartial	**Arbiter** bound to law above morality	**Wanderer** unaligned, pragmatic survivor	**Seeker** restless, unpredictable, curious
Vile	**Tyrant** cruel ruler, domination by law	**Schemer** selfish, manipulator, opportunist	**Reaver** destructive raider, revels in chaos

