

HOW DEADLY IS MY MAGIC?

A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO BATTLE MAGIC
FOR WIZARDS AND CLERICS

OPEN DUNGEONS RPG PRESENTS

Updated



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Your power comes from the spell, the target, the moment - and what you have left for tomorrow's trouble.

Your weapon is your whole day of spells. Your opportunity is this turn.

A single cast can wound an enemy, break a formation, or keep the fighter standing long enough to finish the job. A full reserve gives you choices across many fights. It does not let you pour an entire day of magic into one instant: casting usually spends your action, and enemies keep taking turns.

Know what you can actually cast

Your character level unlocks spells of that level. Two limits apply together: **each distinct spell can be cast once per day**, and each spell level has its own daily casting allowance. Spare casts do not let you repeat a spell you have already used.

Class	Daily allowance at each unlocked spell level
Wizard	Levels 1-2: 5 each Levels 3-7: 4 each Levels 8-9: 2 each
Cleric	Levels 1-3: 4 each Levels 4-6: 3 each Levels 7-9: 2 each

Character level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Wizard total	5	10	14	18	22	26	30	32	34
Cleric total	4	8	12	15	18	21	23	25	27

These are total casting capacities, not damage-spell counts. At level 3, a wizard has 5 first-level, 5 second-level, and 4 third-level casts. A cleric has 4 of each. **Healing and battle spells of the same level share that level's allowance.** Different names do not mean separate budgets.

Growing stronger does more than add spells

Many early spells improve as you level. Guided Arcana adds darts; Pyroburst rises from 4d6 to 6d6 at level 6, then 8d6 at level 9. Read each spell's milestones: a new damage value replaces the old one. Your full caster level also raises the target number of saves against your spells.

Mornings are sacred

The day resets at 6am, but spent spells need 30 minutes of morning study or prayer, completed by 10am, to return. Miss it and unused spells remain available; yesterday's spent spells remain spent. Guard that quiet half hour as carefully as the treasure. This guide covers levels 1-9.

What survives the blast?

Read the spell first. An attack roll, a saving throw, armor and resistance are different defenses.

Armor Class (AC) matters when an attack roll is required. **Damage Reduction (DR)** reduces damage that reaches the target. A spell that hits automatically or allows no save does not automatically ignore DR. Guided Arcana, for example, needs neither an attack roll nor a save; that is reliability, not a promise to bypass armor.

A burst of fire, measured honestly

A level-3 wizard casts **Pyroburst**: 4d6 fire damage in a 20-foot radius, with a DEX Quick save for half. Suppose the damage roll is **16** and each target has **DR 3**, with no fire resistance or immunity. Apply the save reduction before DR.

Save result	Damage received
Ordinary failed save	16 - 3 = 13 HP
Ordinary successful save	16 halved to 8, then 8 - 3 = 5 HP
Natural 20	No spell effect under the general spell-save rule

Against four enemies, two ordinary failures and two ordinary successes produce **36 total damage**: 13 + 13 + 5 + 5. That is excellent work for one turn, but it is not 36 damage to one enemy. If each began with 20 HP, all four are still standing. If an ally is in the blast, that ally is a target too.

A save is not the same as resistance

Use the defense and outcome printed in the spell: Quick (DEX), Tough (CON), or Mind (WIS). Some saves halve damage; others prevent a condition or the whole effect. For player characters, the base save target is **16 minus character level**; a hostile wizard or cleric adds their full caster level. Do not assume every monster has the same chance to resist.

Damage resistance halves the relevant damage; immunity prevents it. Fire is a poor answer to fire immunity, however impressive your dice. Armor DR also applies to elemental damage such as fire, force and radiant unless an exception says otherwise. Psychic damage bypasses armor DR; specific spells may also say they bypass it.

Read the exceptions before spending the cast

A natural 20 saves completely and can cause magic backlash; a natural 1 can mean 25% more damage or a worse condition, as the DN decides. Normally, each target saves once per casting, not once per projectile. Follow explicit spell exceptions for additional or repeated saves. Before relying on a volley against armor, settle how the DN applies DR to its separate hits.

Ask: Will it work on this creature? What survives its defenses? Can I place it without burning my friends?

Power is more than damage

A good cast changes what happens next. Choose the effect that solves the fight in front of you.

Wizards: make the battlefield unfair

Damage now. Pyroburst rewards a clear cluster of enemies. Guided Arcana offers a reliable hit when you cannot afford a miss. Neither is a universal answer: damage type, armor and positioning still matter.

Remove enemy turns. At level 3, Lethargic can affect 2d4 creatures under 90 HP, subject to a WIS Mind save. Sleep can give the party room to retreat or concentrate on enemies still awake. Damage or shaking wakes sleepers: agree on the plan before someone spoils your work.

Invest in repeated attacks. At level 3, Firebranch adds 1d6 fire damage to a weapon's hits for 2 minutes 30 seconds, even in an ally's hands. Three successful hits add 3d6 raw damage: an average of 10.5 before applicable defenses. That value depends on the wielder landing those hits; it is not immediate guaranteed damage.

Add another combatant. Wild Summons of Spectral Hound gives a level-3 wizard a summoned ally with 16 HP, AC 14, DR 2 and a 1d6 bite. It acts immediately after you and takes free mental commands. Its value depends on how long it survives and how often it connects, but one cast can contribute across several rounds.

Clerics: judge the enemy, then pass sentence

Clerics have fewer total casts, but their damage is not always lower. **Exile Strike** deals 2d8 radiant damage at level 2, doubled against undead, fiends and qualifying otherworldly creatures, with a CON Tough save for half. Those targets also face an additional WIS Mind save against banishment.

The cleric's **Sunlight Bloom** at level 3 deals 3d6+4 radiant damage: an average of 14.5 raw damage, or 29 against creatures its text says take double. It can also blind. Its **90-foot radius includes allies**; warning them can avoid the blindness save, not the damage. Do not confuse it with the wizard spell of the same name.

Keeping allies fighting is combat power. Litany of Renewal heals up to six living, non-construct targets for 2d8+2 HP each and removes one listed condition from each. That is an average healing roll of 11 per target, though nobody benefits from healing beyond their missing HP. One turn can rescue several allies at once.

Against the dead, count HP. A level-3 cleric has a 60-HP turning pool and destroys affected undead with 30 HP or fewer. Three visible undead with 20 HP each, within 30 feet, can all be dusted: they fit the pool and each is below the 26-HP save threshold. That is a class ability doing work no damage roll needs to do.

Wizard or cleric? Compare the actual spell against the actual enemy. The class name alone does not tell you who hits harder.

Read every role. Blessings, summons, control and healing compete with direct damage for your turn and daily allowances. Class abilities can add more options, but only count the level-up choices you actually selected. A spell list is an arsenal, not a command to throw fire every round.

Leave something in reserve

You cannot predict every room. You can keep track of what each decision costs.

A level-3 day: three decisions, not a combat script

Both casters begin prepared. These selected casts show spending across a hypothetical expedition; allies and other actions still carry the fights.

Moment	Wizard chooses	Cleric chooses
Opening skirmish	Lethargic (level 1) Try to put eligible enemies to sleep.	Harm (level 1) Damage a living target; not undead or a construct.
A stubborn guard	Firebranch (level 2) Empower an ally likely to land repeated hits.	Exile Strike (level 2) Deal radiant damage; check whether its special rider applies.
A clustered fight, then its aftermath	Pyroburst (level 3) Blast a group when allies are clear.	Litany of Renewal (level 3) Restore several injured allies after the exchange.

What remains? The wizard has 4 / 4 / 3 casts at spell levels 1 / 2 / 3: **11 total**. The cleric has 3 / 3 / 3: **9 total**. Those six named spells are spent for the day. A spare third-level cast cannot produce a second Pyroburst or Litany of Renewal.

Save options, not just your biggest dice

Keep a way to affect a different defense or damage type. Keep an answer for a threatened ally. Spend a strong spell early when it prevents serious losses; saving your best magic is little comfort if the party cannot reach the last room. Low-level spells remain useful as they scale, but even those casts are finite.

Magic items extend the expedition

Magic items can supply magic beyond your daily spell allowances. Scrolls are for clerics and wizards; wands are wizard-only; rods and staves serve both. Check charges, activation and recharge rules. Extra magic is not automatically an extra action; charges return only as the item allows.

Before casting: choose the result you need, check the target and allies, then mark both the spell used and its spell-level allowance.

Count damage that lands, enemies denied their turns, and allies kept on their feet. Then count what remains. That is the arsenal you actually carry.

Rules basis: The nine supplied Open Dungeons JSON catalogs: armor-gear, classes, cleric-spells, core-guide, dn-guide, items, races, spells-magic and wizard-spells. Examples use stated hypothetical conditions; raw averages exclude saves, DR, resistance and immunity. No monster kill-rate estimates are assumed.

