



SAVING THROWS

The saving throw system of 2nd edition AD&D has been sorely lacking as a cryptically based hodge podge of class and level which makes little real sense. The new system will use three basic saving throws that work a little differently, each is described below. The base save bonus is +1 per 2 points of the referenced stats above ten, rounding up (i.e. - +1 for a stat of 11 or 12, +2 for a stat of 13 or 14, etc)

Reflex Save

The Reflex save is based on the Dexterity attribute and is modified by the Intuition attribute. Add the base bonuses for each stat together plus any referenced reflex related bonuses (from class and ability bonuses.) This save will be used any time the character is faced with a situation where reaction time, reflexes and the like dictate whether or not the character can avoid the effects

Fortitude Save

The Fortitude save (or Fort save) is based on the Constitution attribute and is modified by the Stamina attribute as well. Add the base bonuses for each stat together plus any referenced reflex related bonuses (from class and ability bonuses.) This save will be used any time the character's body, physiology or soul must deal with effects of something

Willpower Save

The Willpower save (or Will save) is based on the Willpower attribute and is modified by the Perception attribute as well. Add the base bonuses for each stat together plus any referenced reflex related bonuses (from class and ability bonuses.) This save will be used any time the character's mind must deal with the effects of something

Improving Saving Throws

As characters go up in level, they gain bonuses to certain types of saving throws based on their character class and concept. In all cases, these bonuses should be agreed upon by the player and the DM to insure the bonuses are appropriate and make sense. Below are generic guidelines and information for these level improvements:

At 2nd level, all characters gain a +1 to be added to any of the three basic saves (Reflex, Fort, Will) and should be based on their concept. Every two levels, the character gains another +1 to add (L4, L6, L8, etc) Multi-class characters gain this bonus only for their highest class

At 4th Level, in addition to the +1 noted above, all characters gain 2 focused save bonuses, one must be a narrow category assignment and one can be a broad category assignment. With the right concept, the two points may be combined as a narrow category assignment (aka +2 vs something)

At 8th Level, in addition to the normal gains, all characters gain 4 focused save bonuses, two narrow, two broad and may likely improve what was already chosen at 4th level. Alternatively, a character can gain 3 broad bonuses only or 5 narrow bonuses only

At 12th Level, and every four levels beyond (L16, L20, etc) all characters gain an additional 4 focused save bonuses, two narrow, two broad and may likely improve what was already chosen at 4th & 8th level. Alternatively, a character can gain 3 broad bonuses only or 5 narrow bonuses only

Saving Throw Categories

In addition to the main save categories of Reflex, Fortitude and Willpower, there are two categories for bonuses. The first is Narrow Category, which encompasses bonuses which apply to a very particular type of condition or effect. Samples of narrow category save bonuses are: Snake Bites, Stoning, Pit Traps, Demonic Possession, Lightning, etc. The second is Broad Category, which encompasses bonuses that apply to a more broad set of conditions or effects. Samples of broad category bonuses are: Polymorphic Magic, Poisons, Pain Effects, etc

Characters 5th level and below should not gain a saving throw bonus versus a particular area of resistance of more than +3, unless an exceptionally good conceptual reason (remember that they will likely already have a bonus from both stats and skills already!)

Characters 9th level and under should not gain a saving throw bonus versus a particular area of resistance of more than +6. Keep in mind, however, that by this level characters are very competent and should be given a longer leash in coming up with conceptual reasons to have exceptions to this

Characters beyond 9th level should not be expressly limited to a point total, but rather more so the conceptual guideline of such a well established character. Also, keep in mind that a 1 rolled is always a saving throw failure (of course Action Point usage can balance this out)

DETERMINING BASE SAVE DIFFICULTY CLASS (DC)

Using the following rules of thumb you should be able to set an appropriate DC for any saving throw by simply using one provided or adjusting up or down by a point or two. Keep in mind that there are two major kinds of saving throws, those which are for half damage or effect and those which are for negation of effect. This should be a factor in choosing the appropriate DC. Unless noted by the DM all rolls of 1 fail and all rolls of 20 succeed

DC 5 - (Ouch!) Stuff that's pretty easy to avoid or resist, yet sometimes they get ya - wasp stings (½ effect - i.e. - less pain), wet floors (negates the fall), dust in the eyes (negates a blinding effect), etc. - basically your average person is going to avoid these effects most of the time unless they aren't paying attention, are susceptible to the effect or otherwise vulnerable (this will incur a penalty to the save.) Generally most heroes will have a +3 or +4 minimum, so generally this means only that 5% chance of failure by rolling the dreaded natural 1

DC 10 - (Hazardous) Stuff that's not as easy to avoid, especially if you're not paying attention (generally a standard penalty for being surprised or off guard is +4 to the DC) - slippery ice or oil (negates the fall), getting burned by a torch (negates damage), normal venoms (½ damage and effect - which for a zero level may mean the difference between life and death), etc. - basically your average person will often avoid the full effects unless they are in a position to take save penalties. Again, for our heroes this is generally going to be 75% chance of resisting

DC 15 - (Traacherous) Stuff that's hard to avoid and potentially deadly - magic is generally in this range (see below for base spell DCs,) like lightning bolts (½ damage, but will probably still kill a lot of things), deadly venoms (½ damage, but will still kill your average person), a trap door (negates a fall), etc. - basically most of these things are often deadly to your average person (as 99% of the world is filled with zero and 1st level individuals and thus usually a 50-60% chance of being seriously hurt or killed) and begins to challenge starting PC heroes with still mostly a 60% or so chance of saving

DC 20 - (Deadly) Stuff that's almost impossible for an average person to survive - more powerful magic (see below,) like cone of cold (½ damage, but would kill a normal guy anyway) or mind jar (negates possession), magical poisons (negates automatic death, but will still kill an average person), a professionally created trap (½ damage, but will still kill your average Joe), etc. - basically most average persons will instantly be subject to the full effects of these things almost all the time (about 80% or better chance of failure,) while starting PCs will find themselves challenged if this is outside their strengths. Higher level PCs will be better equipped to handle this stuff and resisting these kinds of things is what makes them heroes. At this point, most PCs are going to find themselves in a 40-50% chance of resisting

DC 25 - (Exceptionally Lethal) Stuff that will always affect the average man and will challenge the hero - extremely bad ass magic like power word kill (negates death but still kills most anyone), a trap created by a master (provided the trap can even be saved against, ½ damage, but will probably kill most anyone) - basically non-heroes are toast (roll a natural 20 or you're done,) starting heroes could be in trouble unless they're a specialist in dealing with the item in question while higher level heroes are still going to be challenged and have a serious chance of failing their save. Generally consider this as about a 30% chance for player characters to save

DC 30 - (Legendary) Stuff that will almost always affect the hero and requires heroic effort to resist - legendary and ritual magic, ancient dragon breath, dread gaze of a vampire prince, etc. - lesser heroes are in trouble, greater heroes may have their hands full and may very well be in a situation where only a very good roll will save them

DC 35 - (Ancient Legend) There aren't a lot of things that fall into this category because generally at this point there is no chance of resisting the power in question. However, action points allow saves for things that cannot be resisted and allow characters a chance to do the impossible. This category is for those situations

SPELL DC

Use the following formula to calculate base saving throw targets for spell resistance

Minor Sphere Magic

Base DC = 10+ Spell Level +Special Modifiers

i.e. – Scorching Ray cast by a Fire Elemental specialist would be base 10 +2 (2nd level spell) +1 (specialist bonus) = DC13

Median Sphere Magic

Base DC = 12+ Spell Level +Special Modifiers

i.e. – Cone of Cold cast by an Emerald Sky mage attacking a fire elemental and using his standard ID Weakness skill against it would be base 12 +4 (4th level spell) +2 (inherent weakness of fire elemental) +2 (successful standard skill bonus) = DC20

Major Sphere Magic

Base DC = 14+ Spell Level +Special Modifiers

i.e. – Banishment cast by a Summoning specialist with intense magic would be base 14 +7 (7th level spell) +1 (specialist bonus) +1 (intense magic bonus) = DC 23

How they Work

When a character is posed with a situation of resisting effects of a spell, toxin, mental possession, etc. the DM will assign the most appropriate save to the situation and give it a Difficulty Class (or DC.) The DM and player will use the pre-calculated base for the save bonus and will mutually agree on any skills (generally 1-3 skills maximum) that will give a potential benefit. Rudimentary skills that apply give a cumulative +1 on a successful roll and standard skills a cumulative +2. Specialized skills that apply automatically give a +2 to the save and a +4 if the roll is successful. Any other modifiers are calculated (special bonuses vs Magic, Poison, etc.) and the roll is made

Examples:

An initiate of the Vermillion Flame throws a Flame Jet at a junior member of the Hand. It's a basically a dodge or get the crap burnt out of you situation, the DM assigns a Reflex Save. The spell is 2nd level and is thus Minor Sphere Magic with a base DC of 15 (unadjusted, this is only a 25% chance for anyone to dodge the flame jet, not easy.) The rogue has a 16 Dex and a 13 Intuition, this gives him a bonus of +3 from Dex and +2 from Intuition. Additionally the rogue has the rudimentary Tumbling skill which gives him a +1 to save on a successful roll of the skill. Considering he makes the Tumbling check, the rogue must now roll a d20 +6 and roll higher than 15, if successful he dodges and takes half damage as per the spell description

Kraag'Nak the ogre is stung by a giant bee (i.e. - the foot long version!) The toxin is already in his system, so the DM assigns a Fort Save. The giant bee delivers a fairly potent toxin and from the size, a fair amount of it, so the DM assigns a DC of 20 (in other words, your average Joe would pretty much just die from this sting.) Kraag'Nak has a Constitution of 20 and a Stamina of 20, this gives him a base +5 from Con and +5 from Stamina. Additionally, Kraag'Nak has poison resistance +2 and the standard Endurance skill which will give him a +2 to save on a successful roll of the skill. Kraag'Nak rolls a d20 +14 (with successful skill rolls) to resist the effects of the toxin (in other words a 6 or better...even so Kraag'Nak would not simply die from this, he would take damage and probably survive)

An ancient Chaos demon engages Chadi in mental combat. A mind versus mind situation, the DM assigns a Will Save. The demon has an extremely powerful mind so the DM assigns a DC of 25 (in other words, lesser beings (i.e. - no save bonuses) and creatures have absolutely no chance to resist such power.) Chadi has a Willpower of 18 and a Perception of 15, this gives her +4 from Will and +3 from Perception. Additionally, Chadi has the standard Meditation skill which gives her a +2 with a successful roll and specialization in Meditation: Mental Combat, which automatically gives her a +2 to save and a +4 if a successful skill roll is made. Chadi rolls a d20 +13 (with successful skill rolls) to avoid being drawn into mental combat (in other words 8 or better...even if she fails, she is not possessed, but rather must combat the demon in a contest of wills.)