



## COMBAT PARAMETERS

Most of the aspects covered here are meta gaming aspects designed to manage and govern combat scenarios that you will encounter in the course of the game. Remember, the DM has ultimate jurisdiction over how fights play out, but there are several points that should be rules of thumb when managing fights so that they make sense. Just remember that common sense should overrule the guidelines whenever clear problems

are encountered and whenever the rules over burden the speed of combat, certain elements should be skipped or edited. Below, however are some guidelines to help manage combat

### TIME

The first key piece of combat as well as spell management and other things is how long it actually takes to accomplish something. Overall, time on Al'Akwannon is measured in hours, minutes and seconds just as it is on Earth. However, for purposes of combat, spell duration, casting time and a host of other actions, time is additionally measured in the following increments and their equivalents:

**Turn** – the largest of the non-standard time measurements, one turn is equal to 15 minutes or one quarter of an hour. This is predominately used in measuring spell and power durations, casting times and the like. For ease of calculation there are exactly 4 turns in an hour

**Round** – one round is equal to 5 minutes, one third of a turn or one twelfth of an hour. This is also generally a primary duration and casting measurement for spells and powers. For ease of calculation, there are 3 rounds in a turn and 12 rounds in an hour

**Melee** – or melee round is equal to roughly 8 seconds or one hundredth of a round. Eight seconds is a long time in a fight, but each melee usually involves looking for an opening, some footwork, a few parries and an attack or two. For ease of calculation, there are exactly 37.5 melees within a round, however as this is never an issue worth calculation, you should round to 35 melees per round. There are 7.5 (again, just round to 7) melees in a minute and as you might imagine, it's pretty rare for a combat, wizard duel or anything else of this manner to last more than a round

**Segment** – mostly a measure of when someone acts during a melee, it is equivalent to roughly one tenth of a second and officially there are 80 segments per melee round. For the most part segments don't come much into play unless it is necessary to detail things down to such a level but potentially can make a big difference and will generally be used as a tool for certain key moments of a combat (i.e. – does the wizard's spell go off before the archer can shoot him in close initiative?)

### INITIATIVE

Initiative is the determination of who or what acts first in a melee. Somewhat like real life when your adrenaline surges and things seem to slow down, time during combat is slowed and measured in melee rounds. Each melee is further broken down into segments to see when certain things occur in relationship to others if necessary

Generally however, a basic d20 will be rolled without modifications for a group's initia (to be compared to another group's unmodified roll to see whose side will effectively act first.) Unless there is a need for more fine grained combat management, this is sufficient and players should rotate around the room who rolls initiative each melee round. It is sometimes necessary to determine an individual's initia score. In this case, roll a d20 and add it to 15, this is your base initia for the round. There are many modifiers to this score as listed below. Apply all appropriate modifiers and you get your final score for the melee, the lower the better and the number is effectively which segment your first action will occur on (see samples below)

For the most part, the below information will only be used in special circumstances, otherwise, on your group's initiative all members of your party will move and take their standard actions.

#### Things that make you slower

*Moving* – to make a half move (generally 30ft/5 hexes) takes 20 segments (even though this is technically ¼ of a total melee round,) so if you have to move in order to make your action, you will need to add +20 to your initiative. Making a full move (generally 60ft/10 hexes) takes twice as long (and although this is technically half a melee round, you will be limited to defensive maneuvers only after doing such)

*Spell Casting* – add the number shown in the spell listing (this is the number of segments) and is generally equal to the level of the spell being cast. Otherwise the spell will take a full melee round (which does not take effect until the end of the round and can be interrupted) or will be longer than can be cast in combat time. Zero segment actions can be used immediately on your initiative

*Weapon Speed* – weapons are measured as R (Ranged), 0 (Zero Action), F (Fast), M (Medium), S (Slow) and VS (Very Slow.) Both R and 0 actions take no time beyond your initiative number, however ranged attacks can happen before zero action attacks if the 0 needs to move first. Otherwise the weapon speeds are as follows; F +2, M +4, S +8, VS +10 (this is the number of segments it takes to bring the weapon to bear)

*Low Dexterity* – turn the negative number from your dexterity modifier into a positive number and add it to your initiative total (how many segments slower you react)

*Drawing a weapon* – drawing and preparing a weapon to execute a combat maneuver adds time unless this was accomplished prior to initiative (DM) a non-proficient weapon adds +10 to initia, proficient weapons +6, specialized weapons +4 and weapon of choice or higher +2 (note that the Fast Draw skill cuts this penalty in half for the weapon chosen and eliminates it if standard or better)

*Knockback and knockdowns* – see the section on knockback for full details

*Getting Surprised* – adds +20 segments to initiative in addition to any of the above

### Things that make you faster

*Weapon Specialization* – when using the appropriate weapon, specialization, weapons of choice and weapon mastery subtract 1, 2 and 4 from initia respectively (in addition to that otherwise noted)

*Magic Weapons* – subtract the weapon speed improvement value of the weapon

*High Dexterity* – subtract the bonus (how many segments quicker you react)

*High Level* – subtract one for every 4 levels of experience

### Surprise Modifiers

## MELEE ACTIONS

In any melee round there are several things that can happen that affect what you can do in a given round. The below is an attempt to catalog the most used situations. Other situations must be judged by the DM and per usual common sense will prevail over the guidelines set below

### Free Actions

*One Hex Move* – any character, except a spell caster of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level make step one hex in any direction without impacting their number of actions

### Non-Spellcasting

*Fully Offensive Weapon/HTH* – the character may expend all of his attacks in the melee round and gain any auto (free) parries or dodges provided by an ability, shield or magic item. First attacks correspond with initiative, subsequent attacks are delayed by the weapon speed in question when necessary

*Fully Defensive Weapon/HTH* – the character may expend all parries in the melee round responding to any attack (DM) regardless of initiative

*Combination Weapon/HTH* – this is the most common use, blending the number of attacks and parries by the character depending on the situation. The number of parries dedicated must be declared at the beginning of the round

*Half Move and Action* – the character may move half his normal movement hexes and gain half attacks (and/or parries)

*Full Move and Move Through* – the character may move any number of hexes over half and up to the maximum allowed and perform a single “charge” attack with a weapon or perform a knockdown attempt with velocity modifiers

### Spellcasting

As wizards and priests gain understanding of higher levels of magic, they become able to cast more than one spell in a melee, may move and cast or even fight and cast at the same time (providing they have Combat Spellcasting.) Until 3<sup>rd</sup> level, wizards and priests cannot even move when they cast spells, they must concentrate implicitly and cannot otherwise act. If struck, their spellcasting is disrupted for the entire round (unless combat spellcasting is used.) Upon reaching 3<sup>rd</sup> level, wizards and priests begin to expand their flexibility as listed below:

**3<sup>rd</sup> Level** – the caster may now make free action move (one hex) and cast any minor sphere spell with casting time less than a full melee and at least one spell level lower than his maximum (i.e. – at 3<sup>rd</sup> you may step and cast 1<sup>st</sup> level spells but not 2<sup>nd</sup>)

**5<sup>th</sup> Level** – the caster may now move a half move and cast one minor sphere spell provided the spells are two spell levels or more lower than his maximum (i.e. – at 5<sup>th</sup> you may move and cast 1<sup>st</sup> level spells.) Or the wizard may take a free move and perform an off hand action. If the caster has Combat Spellcasting and rolls successfully, he may split his attacks and casting (i.e. - a 5<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Warrior/Priest who has 2 attacks/round can cast a first level spell and make one attack, but cannot move other than a free move)

**7<sup>th</sup> Level** – the caster may now opt to cast two minor sphere spells in the same round, provided all casting times are less than a full melee, the caster or his party has won initia and they are three spell levels lower than his maximum (i.e. - at 7<sup>th</sup> you may cast two 1<sup>st</sup> level spells, at 9<sup>th</sup> you may cast two 2<sup>nd</sup> level spells and at 12<sup>th</sup> you may cast two 3<sup>rd</sup> level spells)

**9<sup>th</sup> Level** – the caster may now make a free move and cast a median sphere spell, provided the spell is at least one spell level lower than his maximum (i.e. – at 9<sup>th</sup> level you may step and cast 4<sup>th</sup> level spells but not 5<sup>th</sup>)

**12<sup>th</sup> Level** – the caster may now make a half move and cast one median sphere spell provided the spells are two spell levels or more lower than his maximum (i.e. – at 12<sup>th</sup> you may move and cast 4<sup>th</sup> level spells.) Or the wizard may take a free move and perform an off hand action. If the caster has Combat Spellcasting and rolls successfully, he may split his attacks and casting (i.e. - a 12<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Warrior/Priest who has 3 attacks/round can cast a 4<sup>th</sup> level spell and make two attacks, but cannot move other than a free move)

## COMBAT MANEUVERS

### Basic Parry

All characters with a weapon proficiency or a shield (proficient or not) can make an attempt at a parry maneuver. To attempt a parry with a weapon, the character must sacrifice at least one attack. Shields gain auto parries based on their size (free parry attempts) and may gain additional parries if the shield proficiency is purchased. At the beginning of the combat round, the character must elect how many parries he will reserve. To make a parry attempt, simply roll 1d6 and add the weapon or shield to hit bonus (this is subtracted from the attackers to hit roll)

*Melee Weapons* - each attack sacrificed to defense allows the character two parry attempts. Once Weapon of Choice level is reached, the character gains one auto parry attempt. Once Weapon Mastery is achieved, the character gains two auto parry attempts, High Mastery provides three and Grand Mastery provides five

*Small Shields* - provide one auto parry attempt and gain +1 and Muscle bonus to parry

*Medium Shields* - provide two auto parry attempts and gain +2 and Muscle bonus to parry

*Large Shields* - provide two auto parry attempts and gain +4 and Muscle bonus to parry

### Basic Called Shot

Any character with weapon specialization or better may attempt a called shot. The DM will adjust penalties depending on the difficulty of the maneuver. The basic penalties for a called shot are as follows:

Initia penalty - +2

Defender parry bonus - +4

Attack penalty - -4

### Knockback Rules and Effects

Knockback is only in effect when more than 25% of an individual's hit points are done in damage in a single round. Base knockback is determined by subtracting 3d6 from the total damage done by a strike. If the result is negative, no knockback occurs. If the result is five or less, the victim is knocked to the ground. Otherwise, remaining damage is divided by five and the remaining number is the total inches (five feet) of knockback (round down all fractions)

### Knockback Modifiers

*These modifiers are added to the remaining damage before dividing by five*

-3d6 Target is three size classes larger

-2d6 Target is two size classes larger

-1d6 Target is one size class larger

-1d6 Target rolled with punch (tumbling, martial arts, etc)

-1d6 Target is airborne or levitating

+1d6 Using a blunt weapon (mace, fist, etc.)

+1d6 Target is one size class smaller

+1d6 Minor sphere attack magic (below 3rd level)

+2d6 Target is two size classes smaller

+2d6 Median sphere attack magic (4th - 6th level)

+2d6 Attacker on charging mount

+3d6 Target is three size classes smaller

+3d6 Major sphere attack magic (7th - 9th level)

## Knockback Damage and Effects

If knocked down by an attacker, the target loses any remaining attacks for the round and has a +10 penalty on his or her next initiative (or loses initia if using group initia)

If knocked back, damage is as follows:

- No impediments - 1HP damage / hex of knockback
- Light objects (tables, bar stools, etc.) - 1HP damage / hex KB + 1d6
- Glass and similar objects - 1HP damage / hex KB + 1d8
- Solid objects (stone, solid wall, etc.) - 1HP damage / hex KB + 1d4 + 2
- Weapons and weapon-like objects - 1HP damage / hex KB + weapon damage

In addition, targets who suffer knockback lose all remaining attacks for the round, lose initiative for next round, and may have to close to combat distance all over again

## Velocity Damage Modifiers

The velocity of mounts and full speed rushes into combat does supply a little extra damage in combat, they are as follows (round to nearest whole number for bonuses):

- Bladed Weapons do +1 damage / 15 mph of velocity
- Blunt Weapons do +1 damage / 10 mph of velocity
- Pole Arms and Lances do double damage on a full charge, otherwise there is no damage bonus

(i.e. -- an ogre rushes into combat wielding a huge tree branch, running full speed he is moving 24 mph. If he is able to hit his victim, he will gain a +2 to damage with the branch)

## Visibility Ranges

A variety of things affect how far away things can be targeted, be it arrows, throwing knives or spells. Use the below rules of thumb to decide if creatures and objects can be targeted or not based on below guidelines. Keep in mind certain AOE attacks (flaming oil, spells, etc.) can avoid some of these visibility obstacles, but not always

Clear Sky	May target up to full visual range/1000 yards usual max (DM)
Mist/Light Rain	May target up to appx 500 yards usual (DM)
Twilight/Pre-dawn	May target up to appx 300 yards usual (DM)
Light Fog/Light Snow	May target up to appx 200 yards usual (DM)
Night w/visible Full Moon	May target up to appx 50 yards usual (DM)
Moderate Fog/Medium Snowfall	May target up to appx 50 yards usual (DM)
Night w/Partial Moon	May target up to appx 35 yards usual (DM)
Night w/no Visible Moon	May target up to appx 20 yards usual (DM)
Heavy Fog/Blizzard	May target up to appx 10 yards usual (DM)

Versus night and darkness modifiers, creatures with nightvision may generally target up to their night vision range (DM)

## Unusual Size Charts

### Special Damage Bonuses

Muscle	Damage +	Muscle	Damage +	Muscle	Damage +	Muscle	Damage +
17	+1	18/76-90%	+3	20	+5	24	+7
18	+1	18/91-99%	+3	21	+5	25	+8
18/01-50%	+2	18/00%	+4	22	+6		
18/51-75%	+2	19	+4	23	+6		

## Size Chart

*Small Class* - 4 ft or under / 100 lbs or under; includes the PC races Barkah, Dwarf, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling and Kobold

*Humanoid Class* - 4'1" - 7'6" / 101 - 499 lbs; includes the PC races Arachnahd, Beastman, Deadeye, Elf, Half-Elf, Human, Lionman, Orc, Half-Orc, Picis, Scaloid and Winged Folk

*Ogre Class* - 7'7" - 12' / 500 - 900 lbs; includes the PC races Centaur and Half-Ogre

*Giant Class* - 12'+ / 900 lbs+

## Damage Conversion

- Giant vs Small - 3x special damage chart bonus
- Giant vs Human - 2x special damage chart bonus
- Ogre vs Small - 2x special damage chart bonus
- Human vs Small - Normal special damage chart bonus
- Ogre vs Human - Normal special damage chart bonus
- Giant vs Ogre - Normal special damage chart bonus

## To Hit Conversion

- One size level difference - victim gains one better AC
- Two sizes difference - attacker is -1 to hit, victim gains two better AC
- Three sizes difference - attacker is -2 to hit, victim gains three better AC

## Morale

Situational morale does not affect player characters directly. PCs remain in whatever mood the player wishes their character to be in, no matter how appropriate or not (completely inappropriate behavior by PCs should be handled by the DM's handing out of role playing and character interaction XP instead.) Hirelings in service to PCs, soldiers, people on the street, creatures, monsters, animals and the like, however are most certainly affected by morale

All creatures usually start out with normal morale unless lead by a skilled leader or already in a state of encouragement or discouragement due to environmental reasons (i.e. – an army camped in the cold of winter without a strong leader and running low on supplies generally will equate to a discouraged group; a band of local militia celebrating their independence day, in excellent spirits and high on “their” land will often equate to an encouraged group, etc.) Events that happen within combat will affect morale in either a positive or negative way, use the below guidelines to handle morale when necessary and apply DM caveat to anything based on your perception of the situation

Base morale for anyone is 20% (thus when a morale check is forced your average 0 level person will need to roll under 20% to not be affected.) In other words, 4 times out of 5 if faced with a threatening situation a person will likely choose the “flight” option versus the fight option. This base 20% should be altered with the below modifiers (and may be fudged one way or the other as necessary as the DM sees fit)

### Positive Modifiers

Every full class level	+5% (for multi-classed NPCs only the highest level applies)
Appropriate training	+10% (militia, emergency response, etc.)
Part of organized troops	+5%
Defending homeland	+15%
Defensive terrain advantage	+5%
Strong leadership/favored troops	+10%
Fighting against a hated enemy	+20%
Outnumber opponent 4 or more to 1	+15%
Magic Using ally	+10%

### Negative Modifiers

Weak leadership	-5%
Poorly treated troops/creatures	-20%
Abandoned by friends	-30%
Most powerful ally killed	-20%
No enemies defeated	-10%
Unable to hurt/affect opponent	-40%
Outnumbered 4 or more to 1	-15%
Creature has lost 25% HP	-10%
Creature has lost 50% HP	-20%
Target surprised	-10%
Non-magic vs magic using types	-10%
Zero level or less than 1HD	-10%

### Unaffected by Morale

13 <sup>th</sup> level/HD or higher	Cannot be affected by negative morale (DM)
Mindless Undead	Cannot be affected by positive or negative morale (DM)
Extra-dimensional creatures	Cannot be affected by negative morale (DM)

What triggers a morale roll? This is mostly left up to the DM, but generally should be things of this nature. Positive rolls can be initiated by a strong leader making a successful skill roll or series of skill rolls (DM) to encourage followers (i.e. – Leadership, Oratory to submit rousing words of encouragement, Intimidation to make them scared to fail, etc.; DM) A variety of spells can affect morale and cause the feeling to improve, a leader or respected warrior or the like can fell an impressive looking opponent, etc. Negative rolls can be initiated by a weapon master's skill executed against one's compatriots, a strong leader falling in combat or taking more than 50% of one's overall HP. Beyond this, the DM should assign such rolls as are appropriate and without impressive actions being taken, only one morale check should be allowed per 4 melee rounds as a rule

Broken/Cowardly – Will flee or surrender at the first opportunity or will hide as best as possible

Shaken/Cautious – a -2 penalty to all rolls and -10% to any appropriate skill checks (DM)

Discouraged – a -1 penalty to hit and will saves; -5% on appropriate skills (DM)

Normal – no bonuses or penalties

Encouraged – +1 to hit and will saves; +5% to appropriate skills (DM)

Courageous – +2 to hit and will saves; +10% to appropriate skills; +10% to morale checks

Unbreakable – +4 to hit and on will saves; +20% to appropriate skills; +20% to morale checks