



D&D 4TH EDITION BALANCE FIXES

THIS DOCUMENT compiles various balance fixes and recommendations for *Dungeons & Dragons 4th Edition*. These fixes are primarily meant to apply to the core rulebook (*Player's Handbook 1*, *Dungeon Master's Guide 1*, *Monster Manual 1*).

All options presented herein are just that: **optional**. They may be taken in part or in whole. DMs should use their own judgment when applying these rules, and none should be considered gospel.

— Nerve

REFERENCES

The official sources for this document are 4th Edition books published by Wizards of the Coast later in the edition's lifetime, especially:

- ♦ *Monster Manual 3*
- ♦ *Dark Sun Campaign Setting*
- ♦ *Rules Compendium*
- ♦ *Dungeon Master's Book*
- ♦ *Monster Vault*

The following are the community sources I used to construct this document; read these if you'd like to verify my work. Many thanks for their contributions towards keeping 4th Edition evergreen.

- ♦ [How to get started with D&D 4th Edition without DDI](https://songoftheblade.wordpress.com/2015/12/20/how-to-get-started-with-dd-4th-edition-without-ddi/)
(<https://songoftheblade.wordpress.com/2015/12/20/how-to-get-started-with-dd-4th-edition-without-ddi/>)
- ♦ [Monster Manual 3 on a business card](https://blogofholding.com/?p=512)
(<https://blogofholding.com/?p=512>)
- ♦ [hit point lessons from mm3 on a business card](https://blogofholding.com/?p=782)
(<https://blogofholding.com/?p=782>)
- ♦ [Sly Flourish's Master DM Sheet](https://slyflourish.com/master_dm_sheet.pdf)
(https://slyflourish.com/master_dm_sheet.pdf)
- ♦ [A Boot on the Face of Level 1 Damage ... Forever!](https://dmg42.blogspot.com/2012/02/boot-on-face-of-level-1-damage-forever.html)
(<https://dmg42.blogspot.com/2012/02/boot-on-face-of-level-1-damage-forever.html>)
- ♦ [Damage Adjustment Follow-up & Nightmare Mode](https://dmg42.blogspot.com/2012/03/damage-adjustment-follow-up-nightmare.html)
(<https://dmg42.blogspot.com/2012/03/damage-adjustment-follow-up-nightmare.html>)
- ♦ [FoxLee's 4e Template for GM Binder](https://www.gmbinder.com/share/-MfVV_mJ8URcjEKpge-R)
(https://www.gmbinder.com/share/-MfVV_mJ8URcjEKpge-R)

MONSTER MATH

Thanks to the Blog of Holding for compiling this monster construction math based on the latest revisions by Wizards of the Coast in *Monster Manual 3* and *Monster Vault*.

BASIC MONSTER STATS

Stat	At Level 0	Per level
AC	14	+1
Def	12	+1
Hit vs. AC	+5	+1
Hit vs. Def	+3	+1
Avg Dmg	8	+1

MONSTER STATS BY ROLE

Role	Lvl 0 HP	HP/level	AC Bonus
Skirmisher	24	+5	-
Controller	24	+5	-
Soldier	24	+5	+2
Brute	26	+7	-2
Artillery	21	+3	-2
Lurker	21	+3	-

DAMAGE MODIFIERS:

- ♦ +25-50% for encounter powers
- ♦ -25% for multitarget powers
- ♦ +25% for brutes
- ♦ 50% for minions

ELITES:

- ♦ x2 HP
- ♦ +2 to Saving throws
- ♦ 1 Action point

SOLOS:

- ♦ x4 HP
- ♦ +5 to Saving throws
- ♦ 2 Action points

DAMAGE DICE

Dice and bonuses are likely to be a more desirable element to include in a stat block than an average damage number. Included here is Sly Flourish's calculated damage dice table.

To make minions more threatening, give them the Low damage profile.

DAMAGE DICE

Level	Min dmg	Low dmg	Med dmg	High dmg	Ltd dmg
1	5	1d6+3	1d8+4	1d8+6	1d8+8
2	5	1d6+4	1d8+5	1d8+7	1d8+9
3	6	1d6+5	1d8+6	1d8+8	1d8+10
4	6	1d8+5	2d6+5	2d6+8	2d6+11
5	7	1d8+6	2d6+6	2d6+9	2d6+12
6	7	1d8+6	2d6+7	2d6+10	2d6+13
7	8	2d6+4	2d8+6	2d8+10	2d8+14
8	8	2d6+5	2d8+7	2d8+11	2d8+15
9	9	2d6+6	2d8+8	2d8+12	2d8+16
10	9	2d6+6	2d8+9	2d8+13	2d8+17
11	10	2d6+7	3d6+9	3d6+14	3d6+19
12	10	2d8+6	3d6+10	3d6+15	3d6+20
13	11	2d8+7	3d6+11	3d6+16	3d6+21
14	11	2d8+7	3d6+12	3d6+17	3d6+22
15	12	2d8+8	3d6+13	3d6+18	3d6+23
16	12	3d6+8	3d8+11	3d8+17	3d8+23
17	13	3d6+9	3d8+12	3d8+18	3d8+24
18	13	3d6+9	3d8+13	3d8+19	3d8+25
19	14	3d6+10	3d8+14	3d8+20	3d8+27
20	14	3d6+11	3d8+15	3d8+21	3d8+29
21	15	3d8+9	4d6+15	4d6+22	4d6+31
22	15	3d8+9	4d6+16	4d6+23	4d6+32
23	16	3d8+10	4d6+17	4d6+24	4d6+33
24	16	3d8+11	4d6+18	4d6+25	4d6+34
25	17	3d8+12	4d6+19	4d6+26	4d6+36
26	17	4d6+11	4d8+16	4d8+25	4d8+33
27	18	4d6+12	4d8+17	4d8+26	4d8+35
28	18	4d6+13	4d8+18	4d8+27	4d8+36
29	19	4d6+14	4d8+19	4d8+28	4d8+38
30	19	4d6+15	4d8+20	4d8+30	4d8+39

ON-THE-FLY FIXES FOR MONSTER MANUAL 1 MONSTERS

These fixes are a **grab bag**, to take as needed according to your judgment. They should make monsters more exciting and a challenge appropriate for the context in which they're faced.

DOUBLE ATTACK

The capability for multiple attacks stops monsters from being miserable HP sponges.

- ♦ Treat Ranged and Melee Basic Attacks (⚔ and ⚒) as if they have a "Double Attack" property, rolling twice to attack twice.
- ♦ Ranged At-Will Powers ⚡ may need to become Ranged Basic Attacks ⚔ and benefit from this change.

BONUS DAMAGE

This change shores up the minimum damage monsters can do.

+1/2 damage per monster level to every attack.

REDUCED HP

This should speed up encounters with monsters which were previously a slog.

-3 or -4 HP per monster level.

BOOSTED RECHARGE

Monsters should be able to use their coolest powers multiple times. Dice add variety and unpredictability.

Lower the Recharge value of all powers with Recharge by 1. A power with Recharge 6 (⚔⚔⚔) becomes Recharge 5 (⚔⚔⚔). Encounter powers without Recharge become Recharge 6 (⚔⚔⚔).

POWERFUL MONSTERS

Elites and solos should have boosted stats and options:

ELITES

- ♦ +2 to Saving throws
- ♦ 1 Action point

SOLOS

- ♦ +5 to Saving throws
- ♦ 2 Action points

Powerful monsters should be given encounter powers to use. These can be sourced from *Monster Manual 3* and *Monster Vault* profiles, or from player class kits.

REACTIVE ATTACKS & CONDITION SHRUG-OFFS

Monsters, especially elites and solos, should be able to react during the players' turns, and should consistently shrug off conditions to prevent stunlocking. This forces tactical player decision-making by giving these monsters the actions of the multiple normal monsters they replace.

Upon any number of possible combat events:

- ♦ Bloodied
- ♦ Death
- ♦ The monster's turn
- ♦ Being attacked while suffering from a condition
- ♦ PCs using certain abilities
- ♦ PCs manipulating certain objects and items
- ♦ etc.

Powerful monsters should sometimes react by:

- ♦ Clearing specific or all conditions.
- ♦ Gaining a Free Action with which to make an attack.
- ♦ Using a specific reaction power.

SKILL CHECKS & CHALLENGES

SKILL CHALLENGE DIFFICULTY

Complexity	Successes	Advantages	Typical DCs
1	4	–	4 moderate
2	6	–	5 moderate, 1 hard
3	8	2	6 moderate, 2 hard
4	10	4	7 moderate, 3 hard
5	12	6	8 moderate, 4 hard

SKILL CHALLENGES

Wizards stumbled explaining these out of the gate, and best communicated what these are in the *Dungeon Master's Book*.

Skill challenges are a simple concept: Instead of one PC solving a problem with a single skill check, the party solves a complex multi-step task using a series of appropriate and/or creative skill checks.

SKILL CHALLENGE RULES

Accumulate the necessary successes before 3 failures.

- ◆ Each failure should have some small consequence (e.g. losing healing surges, taking damage).
- ◆ Failing three times should still move the action forward, but have dire consequences. (Ex: Three failures escaping a collapsing dungeon – each PC must roll Athletics or Acrobatics to escape last minute or is crushed dead.)
- ◆ The same PC can't use the same skill twice.

ADVANTAGES

Award these at DM's discretion up to the limit for that complexity level to give PCs a fair chance.

- ◆ A hard success counts as both a hard and a moderate success.
- ◆ A hard success removes a previous failure instead of counting as success.
- ◆ An easy success counts as moderate success.
- ◆ Allow a PC to get a second moderate success with a skill already used.

SKILL CHECK DC BY LEVEL

Level	Easy	Moderate	Hard
1	8	12	19
2	9	13	20
3	9	13	21
4	10	14	21
5	10	15	22
6	11	15	23
7	11	16	23
8	12	16	24
9	12	17	25
10	13	18	26
11	13	19	27
12	14	20	28
13	14	20	29
14	15	21	29
15	15	22	30
16	16	22	31
17	16	23	31
18	17	23	32
19	17	24	33
20	18	25	34
21	19	26	35
22	20	27	36
23	20	27	37
24	21	28	37
25	21	29	38
26	22	29	39
27	22	30	39
28	23	30	40
29	23	31	41
30	24	32	42

PLAYER CHARACTER FIXES

MELEE TRAINING FEAT

This Essentials feat is useful for certain classes and builds.

Use another ability modifier besides Str for Melee Basic Attacks. Add only ½ the modifier to the damage roll.

BASLINE VERSATILE EXPERTISE & IMPROVED DEFENSES

Making these two feats baseline abrogates the "feat tax" of having to spend feat points on the objectively best feats in the game.

+1 Attack, Fort, Ref, and Will feat bonus per tier (+1 at 1st, +2 at 11th, +3 at 21st)

DARK SUN FIXED ENHANCEMENT BONUS

This intrinsic enhancement bonus is meant to make items more meaningful and lessen the need for a treadmill of excessive gear handouts.

- ♦ +1 Attack & Damage and +1d6 Critical Damage enhancement bonus at 2nd, 7th, 12th, 17th, 22nd, 27th levels
- ♦ +1 AC, Fort, Ref, Will enhancement bonus at 4th, 9th, 14th, 19th, 24th, 29th lvs

If a magic item gives an enhancement bonus to attack, damage, or defense, choose between the item's bonus or the Fixed Enhancement Bonus (unless otherwise noted). Magic weapons used with a power may use the Fixed Enhancement Bonus for attack and damage, while keeping the weapon's critical bonus and other properties.

COMPILED TABLE – BENEFITS BY LEVEL

Level	Benefits
1	+1 Attack, Fort, Ref, Will feat bonus
2	+1 Atk & Dmg, +1d6 Crit dmg enh. bonus
3	–
4	+1 AC, Fort, Ref, Will enh. bonus
5	–
6	–
7	+1 Atk & Dmg, +1d6 Crit dmg enh. bonus
8	–
9	+1 AC, Fort, Ref, Will enh. bonus
10	–
11	+1 Attack, Fort, Ref, Will feat bonus
12	+1 Atk & Dmg, +1d6 Crit dmg enh. bonus
13	–
14	+1 AC, Fort, Ref, Will enh. bonus
15	–
16	–
17	+1 Atk & Dmg, +1d6 Crit dmg enh. bonus
18	–
19	+1 AC, Fort, Ref, Will enh. bonus
20	–
21	+1 Attack, Fort, Ref, Will feat bonus
22	+1 Atk & Dmg, +1d6 Crit dmg enh. bonus
23	–
24	+1 AC, Fort, Ref, Will enh. bonus
25	–
26	–
27	+1 Atk & Dmg, +1d6 Crit enh. bonus
28	–
29	+1 AC, Fort, Ref, Will enh. bonus
30	–