

Abstract Combat

Combats can be lengthy affairs, consuming vast amounts of game time but not progressing the story. Unless the combat *means* something, combat can be abstracted into a narrative, following fewer rules and requiring fewer dice.

Assigning Dice

Assign a die to each player taking part in the battle, as follows:

- d4 for sorcerers, elementers and humans without an adventuring profession
- d6 for mystics and journeymen
- d8 for disciples
- d10 for knights and armsmen

Enemy combatants that do not have a profession roll 1d8, which the GM should feel free to adjust to suit the encounter.

Adjust Dice

Magicker professions have the option to use magic to increase their dice:

- For each MP a sorcerer or elementer is prepared to expend, increase the die by 2 steps, max 4 steps (i.e., d4 -> d8 -> d12)
- If a Disciple is prepared to expend an MP, increase their die to d10.
- If the Mystic wants to make a Psychic Fatigue check, increase the die by 1 step for each -1 penalty to the check, max 3 steps (i.e., d6 -> d8 -> d10 -> d12).

Resolve Actions

In initiative order, each character deals an amount of damage equal to the roll of their die, minus their opponent's AF (shields add 1 to the wielder's AF). The player (or GM) then narrates how the target loses that many Health Points. Magickers should not feel constrained to the effects of published spells or fighters limit themselves to official combat manoeuvres and weapons in describing the outcome of the round.

Conclusion

Whilst it lacks the finesse of a full combat, it is simple and fast and keeps the narrative elements flowing. For the encounters that have genuine repercussions on the story, such as end-of-adventure fights, or cliff-hanger encounters, then run the combats in as much detail as you feel will build tension and create a sense of satisfaction.

Combat should not become a repetitive sequence of dice being rolled – if combat loses the narrative and tension, becoming nothing more than an exercise in dice rolling and numerical tracking, then the role-playing aspect of the game has been lost. Never let combat become something through which the characters grind; it should be as much a part of the story as any other encounter with an NPC.