

Conan Atlantean Edition

Key Feature Changes

The following lists the changes that have been made and where they occur.

DEFENCE VALUE ABOLISHED

The old system of 'DV when dodging' and 'DV when parrying' was ambiguous and has led to confusion on the message boards. Since there is never any occasion to use DV *other* than when dodging or parrying, having a single statistic that then has to be qualified with 'when dodging' or 'when parrying' is cumbersome and redundant.

The new version uses Base Defence, Dodge Defence and Parry Defence. Base Defence is what you are left with when you are flat-footed, stunned or otherwise unable to dodge or parry.

A modifier that applies to Dodge Defence or Parry Defence affects that Defence value alone. Any modifier that applies simply to 'Defence' (such as a penalty for squeezing through a tight space) affects whatever kind of Defence you are using at the time.

'LOSE DEX BONUS TO DV' REPLACED WITH 'CANNOT DODGE OR PARRY'

The long-running controversy about loss of Dex bonus is resolved by simply having opponents in certain conditions (e.g. flat-footed) 'unable to dodge or parry'. This means that they are limited to their Base Defence. By taking this route, we neatly avoid describing anything in terms of 'loss of bonuses'.

This makes characters who are unaware, flat-footed and so forth much easier to hit, as they cannot use any of their class-based or feat-based defences. To a d20-seasoned audience, this may seem horrific. The logic

here is really that 'loss of Dex bonus to AC' in d20 really means 'unable to defend yourself with anything other than the armour you have on'. To do honour to this in Conan, we must take the same route. Armour, as you, the players, are discovering, makes *all* the difference.

FEINT CLARIFIED

A successful feint now prevents your opponent from dodging or parrying your next blow. You can thus sneak attack him.

SNEAK ATTACK SECTION ADDED

The Combat chapter now has a section on Sneak Attack which explains, once and for all, which circumstances allow a sneak attack.

PARRYING RULES EXPANDED

The rules for using Parry Defence have been expanded slightly (you need something to parry with or you are penalised) and several optional rules have been included, covering weapon length and weapon breakage.

FIVE-FOOT STEP CLARIFIED

The five-foot step now provokes an attack of opportunity if it is combined with an action that would do so, such as making a ranged attack.

BESTIARY CORRECTED

Many creatures in the Bestiary were missing Feats and had incorrect Initiative modifiers (the Reflex save modifier had not been included). This is now fixed. The Elephant is also introduced as per John Cooper's recommendation.



BALANCE ADJUSTED

The stipulation that you cannot move to avoid a blow while balancing has been adjusted as follows:

'Being Attacked while Balancing: While balancing, you cannot move to avoid a blow, so you cannot dodge. You can, however, use your Parry Defence, though you cannot add your Strength bonus to Parry Defence without putting yourself at risk. (If you parry an attack and use your Strength bonus, you must make another Balance check against the same DC to remain standing.) If you have 5 or more ranks in Balance, you can dodge or parry while balancing and can use your Strength bonus to Parry Defence without risk. If you take damage while balancing, you must make another Balance check against the same DC to remain standing.'

The rationale is that parrying does not require movement of the feet, whereas dodging does; one thinks of American Gladiators sparring on top of narrow platforms, who are not able to dodge but are able to parry.

GRAPPLE CLARIFIED

The defence rules when grappling have been clarified. Grapple Defence has been introduced.

The 'damage your opponent' option while grappling has been clarified as ignoring DR from armour.

ATTACKING OBJECTS CLARIFIED

Hardness ratings have been included for various materials. The tables for material hardness and hit points have been included along with the DCs for Strength checks to break various items. These were missing from the first printing. You do not use Armour Piercing when attacking an object, nor can you use Finesse to bypass its Hardness.

GROUP TACTICS SECTION ADDED

In order to give Games Masters some idea of how a horde of Picts can easily take down an armoured knight even *without* the Minimum Damage rule, a section on Group Tactics has been added to the Gamesmastering chapter.

DEFENCE MODIFIERS

TABLE ADDED

The first printing had no information regarding the modifiers to your Defence when you were, for example, prone or entangled. A table has now been included, which should clear up any remaining vagueness.

UNTRAINED SKILL USE CLARIFIED

The use of 'trained only' skills untrained has been explained and the contradictory section of SRD deleted. In Conan, characters are able to use 'trained only' skills untrained, but any die roll result of higher than 10 is counted as a 10. Untrained use of non-'trained only' skills is exactly the same as in regular d20. This now fits perfectly with the Conan adage that 'any character can attempt any task'.

MINIMUM DAMAGE OPTIONAL RULE ADDED

The suggested rule that 'armour prevents all but a single point of damage' has been included as an optional rule.

LARGE SHIELD USE CLARIFIED

The previous version allowed a character to strap a large shield to his shoulder, which reduced the parry bonus to +0 but still allowed the shield to be used for parrying, which makes no sense at all. The following text has been substituted:

'It may instead be strapped to the shoulder to allow for two weapons or a two-handed weapon to be used, in which case it no longer confers a parry bonus to your Parry Defence but does confer a +2 shield bonus to Dodge Defence when dodging ranged attacks, rather than the usual +4. A shield strapped to the shoulder allows you to parry attacks if you should be left without a weapon in your hand, although it conveys no parry bonus. Alternatively, a large shield may be strapped to the back, in which case it may not be used to parry with at all and confers no bonus to dodging ranged attacks, but instead gives +2 DR against one opponent per round when the wearer is flanked.'

The feat ‘Gunderland Pike and Shield Fighting’ has been adjusted (it referred to the large shield’s parry bonus as +3, which is incorrect – it should be +4) so that the text now reads as follows:

‘You may wield a large shield and pike simultaneously, without penalty to the use of the pike. The large shield grants a +3 parry bonus rather than the usual +4, however. In addition, the shield confers its full +4 shield bonus to your Dodge Defence when dodging ranged attacks.’

BROKEN WEAPONS SECTION ADDED

The Mighty Blow description in the section on Fate Points mentions how a broken sword might be used as an improvised weapon but does not go into any detail. A short section in the Equipment chapter gives rules for using broken weapons.

RANGED FINESSE FEAT ADDED

The new feat ‘Ranged Finesse’ has been created and included, along with Howard text that justifies its inclusion:

RANGED FINESSE [GENERAL]

Given sufficient time to aim, your ranged attacks find their way between gaps in your foes’ armour.

Prerequisite: Precise Shot.

Benefit: You may take a full-round action to line up an attack with a ranged weapon. You must aim at a specific target. (The act of aiming provokes an attack of opportunity, just as if you had attacked with the weapon.) If, on your next turn, that target is within 30 feet and has not moved more than 30 feet since his last action, you may attempt to finesse past his armour with your ranged attack. You can also ready an attack while aiming, but you must have been aiming at the same target continuously for at least one round in order to attempt to finesse. If you lose sight of your target or attack a different target, your aim is broken. Aiming requires your full concentration and you must make a Concentration skill check if you suffer distraction (see page 158). If you are using a bow, you can continue to aim for a number of rounds equal to 5 + your Strength modifier, after which you take one point of non-lethal damage for every round on which you continue to aim.

Normal: Ranged attacks cannot ordinarily be finessed.

For answer the Count made a quick gesture with his hand below the points of the palisade. Almost instantly a shaft hummed venomously through a loop-hole and splintered on Strom’s breastplate. The pirate yelled ferociously, bounded back and ran toward the beach, with arrows whistling all about him. His men roared and came on like a wave, blades gleaming in the sun.

‘Curse you, dog!’ raved the Count, felling the offending archer with his iron-clad fist. ‘Why did you not strike his throat above the gorget? Ready with your bows, men – here they come!’

DAMAGE RESISTANCE FOR HORSES NERFED

All horses have had their damage resistance halved, following player incredulity on the message boards.

‘CAST A SPELL’ SECTION FROM SRD ADDED

The ‘cast a spell’ section from the SRD has now been added to the Combat chapter, with due modification. (This section was missing before.)

NO CHANGE TO HOWARD SECTION

Since the whole Hyborian Age section is a reproduced piece by Howard that has already been published numerous times, we thought it best to leave it as it should be!

MONETARY REWARD FOR PERFORM SKILL ALTERED

We have changed the SRD rewards for Perform skill checks to what seemed to be an appropriate set of amounts for Conan.

PRE-EMPTING A POTENTIAL ISSUE: FIGHTING DEFENSIVELY, TOTAL DEFENCE AND DODGE BONUSES

This is arguably splitting the finest of hairs, but it is nonetheless worth bringing up. In standard d20, the bonus you

gain to Armour Class when fighting defensively or using the total defence action appears to be a dodge bonus, though it is not referred to as such in the Combat section of the SRD – only in the Skills section, under Tumble.

In Conan, we think it is wholly right that a bonus for fighting defensively should be *to Defence* rather than specifically to Dodge Defence. Fighting defensively and total defence simply mean that you are focusing more on defending yourself than on attacking in the first instance, and in the second, that you are focusing wholly on defending yourself. Whether you are defending with dodges or parries, you should be able to emphasise defence at the expense of attacks.

The reason we bring this up is that *if* we retained the idea that fighting defensively and total defence gave you a *dodge* bonus, then the entire benefit of fighting defensively could be undone with a simple feint. It does not seem entirely right that a character who takes the total defence action should lose the +4 Defence bonus *and* his Dodge and Parry bonuses *and* his Dexterity bonus if he should be fainted.

In *Conan AE*, we have therefore taken the simple step of having fighting defensively and total defence grant a bonus to Defence, of +2 and +4 respectively. These are now circumstance bonuses, not dodge bonuses. This means that there will still be some hope of defending yourself against an able feinter. The text of the Tumble skill has been altered slightly, as follows:

Special: If you have 5 or more ranks in Tumble, you gain an additional +1 dodge bonus to Dodge Defence when fighting defensively, as well as the usual +2 bonus to Defence.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Tumble, you gain an additional +2 dodge bonus to Dodge Defence when executing the total defence standard action as well as the usual +4 bonus to Defence.

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