

OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

RETRO ADVENTURE GAME

Adaptation Guidelines v1.5

Over the last two decades, a large number of old-school adventure games have been published, many of which—like *Old-School Essentials*—are closely compatible with the 1981 Basic/Expert rules.

While each of these games has its own variations on rules, presentation, and terminology, many are high cross-compatible. This cross-compatibility between games means that a great wealth of

adventures, campaign settings, and rules supplements written for other old-school systems can be used with *Old-School Essentials*. Material written for *Old-School Essentials* can likewise be used with many other old-school systems

This document provides guidelines for using material written for some of these systems with *Old-School Essentials*, and vice versa.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Basic Fantasy RPG	2
General Notes	2
AC Conversion	3
Monster Stat Blocks	3
Using OSE Monsters in BFRPG	4
Using BFRPG Monsters in OSE	6
Open Game License	8

BASIC FANTASY RPG

GENERAL NOTES

Basic Fantasy RPG (BFRPG) and *Old-School Essentials* (OSE) are highly compatible, both systems being based on the 1980s Basic/Expert rules (B/X). Comparing a few basics of the two systems:

- ▶ **Armour Class:** OSE uses a dual AC format, supporting both traditional-style descending AC (as used in B/X) and modern-style ascending AC. BFRPG uses modern-style ascending AC. See *AC Conversion, p3* for conversion guidelines.
- ▶ **Saving throws:** OSE and BFRPG use the same saving throw categories.
- ▶ **Character classes and races:** OSE and BFRPG have the same selection of character classes and races (cleric, dwarf, elf, fighter, halfling, magic-user, thief). OSE characters are created by selecting class only (with demihuman classes for dwarf, elf, and halfling). BFRPG charac-

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Website: basicfantasy.org

ters are created by selecting race and class separately (an option presented in *OSE Advanced Fantasy*).

- ▶ **Character advancement:** OSE provides rules for advancement to 14th level (lower for demihuman classes). BFRPG provides rules for advancement to 20th level.
- ▶ **Spells:** OSE and BFRPG have very similar lists of cleric and magic-user spells. BFRPG has a small number of additional cleric spells (including spells of 6th level) and slightly fewer magic-user spells.

AC CONVERSION

BFRPG and OSE use slightly different Armour Class formats that can be converted as follows.

Armour Class Conversion Table		
Armour Type	OSE	BFRPG
None	9 [10]	11
Shield only	8 [11]	12
Leather	7 [12]	13
Leather + shield	6 [13]	14
Chainmail	5 [14]	15
Chainmail + shield	4 [15]	16
Plate mail	3 [16]	17
Plate mail + shield	2 [17]	18
	1 [18]	19
	0 [19]	20
	-1 [20]	21
	-2 [21]	22
	-3 [22]	23

MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

BFRPG and OSE use slightly different monster stat block formats. The ghoulish stat block from each system is shown below, as an example.

OSE Ghoul Stat Block

AC 6 [13], **HD** 2* (9hp), **Att** 2 × claw (1d3 + paralysis), 1 × bite (1d3 + paralysis), **THACO** 18 [+1], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 9, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 25, **NA** 1d6 (2d8), **TT** B

BFRPG Ghoul Stat Block

Armor Class: 14

Hit Dice: 2*

No. of Attacks: 2 claws/1 bite

Damage: 1d4/1d4/1d4, all plus paralysis

Movement: 30'

No. Appearing: 1d6, Wild 2d8, Lair 2d8

Save As: Fighter: 2

Morale: 9

Treasure Type: B

XP: 100

Stat Block Conversion

Detailed guidelines for converting OSE and BFRPG monster stat blocks are provided in the following pages.

USING OSE MONSTERS IN BFRPG

Example OSE Monster

AC 6 [13], HD 2* (9hp), Att 2 × claw (1d3 + paralysis), 1 × bite (1d3 + paralysis), THACO 18 [+1], MV 90' (30'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 25, NA 1d6 (2d8), TT B

AC (Armour Class)

The monster's AC is listed in a dual format, with the traditional-style descending AC (as used in B/X) listed first, followed by the modern-style ascending AC in square brackets.

Using in BFRPG: Take the ascending AC value (in square brackets) and add 1.

HD (Hit Dice)

The monster's Hit Dice, followed by its average hit points in parentheses.

Using in BFRPG: BFRPG and OSE use the same notation format. The values may be used without conversion. The average hit points value may optionally be used, instead of rolling a monster's hit points.

Att (Attacks Usable Per Round)

The attacks the monster can use each round are listed, separated by commas, followed by the damage or special effect inflicted in parentheses. Alternative attack routines that the monster can select from are listed with "or" or square brackets.

Using in BFRPG: Attacks per round and damage may be used without conversion.

THACO (Attack Roll "To Hit AC 0")

The monster's attack chance is listed in a dual format, enabling the use of traditional-style descending AC (as used in B/X) or modern-style ascending AC. The attack roll result required to hit descending AC 0 is listed first, followed by the ascending AC attack bonus in square brackets.

Using in BFRPG: The GM may either:

1. Look up the BFRPG attack bonus for the monster, based on its Hit Dice.
2. (Optionally) use the attack bonus (in square brackets) directly. Note that the attack bonuses for monsters of specific Hit Dice are similar but not identical to those in BFRPG, so using the attack bonus directly will result in slightly different attack probabilities.

MV (Movement Rate)

The monster's exploration movement rate (feet per turn) is listed, followed by its encounter movement rate (feet per round) in parentheses.

Using in BFRPG: In combat, the encounter movement rate (in parentheses) may be used without conversion. In dungeon exploration, the exploration movement rate may be used without conversion.

Turning distances: OSE does not list turning distances. If using this optional rule in BFRPG, assume a default of 5' or use the turning distance value listed for a similar monster.

SV (Saving Throw Values)

The monster's saving throw values are listed in full (D: Death/poison, W: Wands, P: Paralysis/petrification, B: Breath attacks, S: Spells/rods/staves), followed by the Hit Dice at which the monster saves, in parentheses.

Using in BFRPG: The GM may either:

1. Look up the BFRPG saving throw values for the monster, using the fighter saving throws table indexed by the listed "saves as" Hit Dice (the number in parentheses following the monster's saving throw values).
2. (Optionally) use the listed saving throw values directly (the OSE saving throw categories are the same as those in BFRPG). Note that the saving throw values for monsters of specific Hit Dice are similar but not identical to those in BFRPG, so using the values directly will result in slightly different saving throw probabilities.

ML (Morale)

Using in BFRPG: BFRPG and OSE use the same notation format. The values may be used without conversion.

AL (Alignment)

Indicates the monster's general behaviour:

- ▶ **Lawful:** Trustworthy, concerned with the greater good over the good of the individual.
- ▶ **Neutral:** At times trustworthy, and at times untrustworthy, depending on the situation.
- ▶ **Chaotic:** Untrustworthy, utterly selfish.

Using in BFRPG: The listed alignment may be used to determine a monster's behaviour or may be ignored.

XP (XP Award)

The XP award for defeating the monster.

Using in BFRPG: The GM may either:

1. Look up the BFRPG XP award for the monster, based on its Hit Dice and number of special abilities (notated as asterisks beside the HD value).
2. (Optionally) use the listed XP award directly. Note that XP awards for monsters of specific Hit Dice are lower than in BFRPG, so using the values directly will result in lower XP award totals.

NA (Number Appearing)

The number of monsters that may be encountered wandering in the dungeon and (in parentheses) the number encountered in a dungeon lair or wandering in the wilderness.

Using in BFRPG: For dungeon wandering encounters, use the first value. For dungeon lairs, use the second value. For wilderness wandering encounters, use the second value. For wilderness lairs, use the second value multiplied by 5.

TT (Treasure Type)

Using in BFRPG: BFRPG and OSE use the same letter code notation format. The letter codes may be used without conversion.

USING BFRPG MONSTERS IN OSE

Example BFRPG Monster

Armor Class: 14

Hit Dice: 2*

No. of Attacks: 2 claws/1 bite

Damage: 1d4/1d4/1d4, all plus paralysis

Movement: 30'

No. Appearing: 1d6, Wild 2d8, Lair 2d8

Save As: Fighter: 2

Morale: 9

Treasure Type: B

XP: 100

Armor Class

Using in OSE:

► **If using the optional ascending AC rule:** Subtract 1 from the listed AC value.

► **If using the standard (descending) AC rule:** Either subtract the listed AC value from 20 or consult the Armour Class Conversion Table on **p3**.

Hit Dice

Using in OSE: BFRPG and OSE use the same notation format. The values may be used without conversion.

No. of Attacks

The attacks the monster can use each round are listed, separated by slashes. Alternative attack routines that the monster can select from are listed with “or”.

Using in OSE: Attacks per round may be used without conversion.

Damage

The damage inflicted by each of the monster's attacks, listed in the same order as the attacks under No. of Attacks.

Using in OSE: Damage per attack may be used without conversion.

Movement

The monster's encounter movement rate (feet per round).

Using in OSE: The encounter movement rate can be used directly. To calculate the monster's exploration movement rate (feet per turn), multiply the encounter movement rate by 3.

No. Appearing

The number of monsters that may be encountered wandering in the dungeon and optionally the number encountered in its lair (listed as “Lair”) and/or encountered wandering in the wilderness (listed as “Wild”).

Using in OSE: The values may be used without conversion.

Save As

The class and level at which the monster saves are listed.

Using in OSE: OSE referees should look up the OSE saving throw values for the monster using the character saving throws table of the listed class and level.

Morale

Using in OSE: BFRPG and OSE use the same notation format. The values may be used without conversion.

Treasure Type

Using in OSE: BFRPG and OSE use the same letter code notation format. The letter codes may be used without conversion.

XP

The XP award for defeating the monster.

Using in OSE: The referee may either:

1. Look up the OSE XP award for the monster, based on its Hit Dice and number of special abilities (notated as asterisks beside the HD value).
2. (Optionally) use the listed XP award directly. Note that XP awards for monsters of specific Hit Dice are higher than in OSE, so using the values directly will result in higher XP award totals.

Values Not Listed

THAC0: BFRPG does not directly list monsters' THAC0 or attack bonus. OSE referees should look up these values for the monster based on its Hit Dice.

Alignment: BFRPG does not list monsters' alignment. This should either be looked up in a similar OSE monster or inferred from the monster's descriptive text.

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